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DECEMBER 2015 **ISSUE 163**

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# Your Family Tree

GENEALOGY ADVICE YOU CAN TRUST

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## THE 1939 REGISTER

Your in-depth guide to the most important data release in years

**IN DETAIL**  
NURSING  
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### **X MARKS THE SPOT**

How to find your forebears in online electoral registers



### **VICTORIAN PORRIDGE**

The harsh realities of prison life in the 19th century



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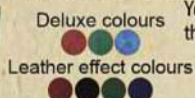


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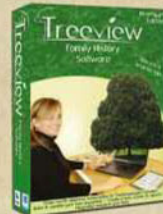


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#### CONTACT THE TEAM

##### Your Family Tree (editorial only),

Studio One, Sheep Street  
Charlbury OX7 3RR, UK  
t. +44 (0) 1865 922923

**Editor** Nell Darby  
e. yft@historymags.co.uk

**Designers**  
Steve Dent, Georgia Styring  
e. design@historymags.co.uk

**Illustrations** Garry Walton,  
Jez Bridgeman

**Advertising sales**  
Daniel Lindsey  
t. +44 (0) 20 7907 6849  
e. daniel\_lindsey@dennis.co.uk

**Executive Editor**  
Andrew Chapman  
e. history@preparetopublish.com

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS & CUSTOMER SERVICES

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# Welcome...

A record set that spans a missing period of our family history



**Nell Darby**  
Editor  
yft@historymags.co.uk



However many records are put online, there will always be more out there for us to discover

**T**he big news in November was the much anticipated release of the 1939 Register online – a collaboration between The National Archives and Findmypast.

This release is particularly significant because it bridges the gap between the 1921 census (which has a prohibition on it ever being released, under the 1920 Census Act, although the government has stated it is likely to release it in 2022), and the 1951 census. Of course, the 1931 census was famously destroyed in a fire, and the 1941 census never took place because of World War 2, so the 1939 Register – the basis for identity cards and ration books – is our primary source of information for where our family members were living, and what they were doing for a job, in the inter-war years and at the start of World War 2. This month, we're pleased to detail the background of the 1939 Register as well as explore what the online Register can tell you.

The 1939 Register's website

also highlights the ways in which we can harness information today to build a more three-dimensional picture of our ancestors' lives. Findmypast has attempted to build a picture of our family's lives and communities through the use of maps, newspapers and occupational data, and this may well lead family historians into new areas of research.

Of course, it being the December issue, we can't ignore the festive period. This month, we get into the Christmas spirit by looking at what our Christmas wishes would be as genealogists and historians – what else would we like to see released, and what do we wish we had asked our family members while they were alive? What records would make our researching easier, and what could Santa deliver to enable us to track down elusive ancestors? This issue illustrates that however many records are put online, or made easily accessible to us, there will always be more out there for us to discover. So happy Christmas, and happy searching! ■

## Have your say...

Share your views and opinions online



yft@historymags.co.uk



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Send in your research queries or mystery pictures for our experts to analyse. We also welcome your old photos for Family Snapshots, your letters and your case study stories – send us an email now!

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We welcome your research stories and family photographs: email [yft@historymags.co.uk](mailto:yft@historymags.co.uk) or write to the address on page 3!

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Following the recent release of electoral rolls online, we look at what they tell you about who could vote, and how.



## HAVE YOUR SAY



Every month our editor, Nell, picks the best of your letters on everything to do with family history. You can contact her via these methods:

**Email** [yft@historymags.co.uk](mailto:yft@historymags.co.uk)

**Post** *Your Family Tree*, Studio One, Sheep Street, Charlbury OX7 3RR

**Twitter** @yourfamtreemag

**Facebook** /yourfamilytreemaguk

## WHY WE NEED WW1 STORIES

With reference to Anne Sherman's letter in YFT 161, I disagree with her [about whether the media is including too many WW1 stories]. I am interested in history, especially history closer to home, and the two World Wars. I love hearing of the stories of others and their families caught up in the war. I have several relatives who were killed in World War 1, and have traced their stories, as far as I can go, to find out more about them. Uncles who I

Infantry from the 2nd Battalion, Auckland Regiment, New Zealand Division, after the Battle of Flanders-Courcelette. Many New Zealanders died in WW1



never met but who have become real to me through stories and photos and the bad times they had. I have been on several Battlefield Tours, and found their burial sites. I have also found stories of those who survived and came home – if they hadn't, I wouldn't be here, to thank you to them and their stories. So, please, from my point of view, keep the stories and records coming.

**JEAN PELHAM, VIA EMAIL**

I've enjoyed the stories about the various battles, especially seeing that huge numbers of New Zealanders died in WW1, and despite not having direct family members involved. I like the case studies of individual members' families who were involved in some aspect of this devastating war – it gives a human aspect rather than the military history view. I'm

waiting for WW2 information – I want to know what my second cousin Eric Stone did to receive the DFC prior to being killed in an air raid over Germany in 1943, aged 21 – a tragic loss for his family.

**CAROL DYER, VIA FACEBOOK**

**It's good to hear so many responses about this issue; and thanks for letting us know why wartime stories matter to you. If anyone has any information to help Carol with her WW2 relative, do get in touch.**

## Life as a young genealogist

As a 17 year old, you would probably think that I am like most people of my age, caught up in the stereotypical teenage bubble of parties, fashion and festivals. That's definitely not me, though. I prefer to consider myself as different, breaking into another world – the world of the past.

My mother had been an avid researcher of our family history since she was a teenager and it was always a puzzle to me as to why she spent hours on the computer, gazing at documents. It was only when, about five years ago, I peered over mum's shoulder whilst she was browsing through a census, I remember mum asking me questions such as, "what could we do now to find this?" or "how should we do that?" and I had caught the genealogy bug – it would never leave me.

I know that the detective work and challenging aspect appealed. If you cannot find a record or a vital fact about someone, you need to think laterally. Research sideways and go

down different directions in order to track down what you are looking for. The addiction may have been furthered by the immersion into the lives of ancestors. It is so fascinating to let your imagination thrive, when reading about the lifestyles of different generations. Of course, all of this is helped by such modern innovations as Google Street View, where you can visit the very houses that your ancestors lived in!

An issue that I have always had with family history though is how limited the number of fellow genealogists seems to be. Or at least, genealogy appears to have been reserved as something only older people do. Of course, I apologise if I am mistaken. Family history has been one of the most rewarding things in my life to date. There is so much to discover no matter who you are. If you are like me, it could be uncovering alleged suicide in mid-Wales, marital affairs resulting in illegitimate children and royal connections – not to mention changes of identity in the Indian military

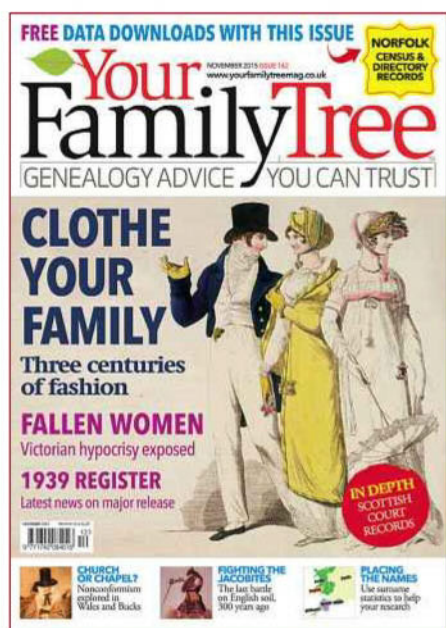
and intrepid women on transatlantic adventures.

Genealogy is something I will always love, but the lack of interest in it, especially by the younger community, is something that disappoints me. I do not know anybody else who did genealogy as for their Duke of Edinburgh Award, or who has trekked Welsh countryside in the rain specifically to find a grave. To YFT readers – tell your children and grandchildren about the wonder that is genealogy, because otherwise they are missing out on the experience of a lifetime.

**MEGAN HARRISON, VIA EMAIL**

**What a lovely letter, Megan – we're certainly with you on the joys of being a family history detective and tracking down fascinating ancestors. We hope that there are family historians out there of all ages, and would welcome hearing from any other teenage genealogists!**





## A 24 FEET LONG FAMILY TREE

Is it possible to put a family tree onto a disc? I have traced the Paine family through all generations – 700 names. My family tree is 24 feet long and two feet wide. It would benefit me if all the details could be put onto a disc, so I could share it.

**DEREK J. PAINE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE**

How would readers advise Derek on the best way to save and share his family tree? And does anyone have a written family tree that exceeds Derek's impressive one? Let us know!

## SEARCHING ON THE CHEAP

In reply to Philip Hind Woodward (Letters, YFT 162), I would suggest he checks with his local library service and archive offices to see which subscription websites they have free access to. Different areas have different arrangements. I am lucky in that I live close to the boundary of three local authorities. Whilst all have the worldwide Ancestry site free to library members, one also has access to Findmypast and another to The Genealogist. The archive offices may also have transcripts and indexes produced by the local Family History Society, as well as their own online sites.

He may also be interested in the many free websites including FamilySearch, FreeBMD, FreeCEN, FreeREG, UKBMD and Online Parish Clerks. In relation to FamilySearch he should look at the collections rather than just the search

# Socialhistory



This is our monthly summary of what readers and those in the history and genealogy fields have been talking about on social media, via our Facebook page and Twitter. Contribute at [www.facebook.com/yourfamilytree](http://www.facebook.com/yourfamilytree) and [www.twitter.com/yourfamtreemag](http://www.twitter.com/yourfamtreemag)

Following a Guardian article on the issue, we asked on Facebook whether the use of the phrase 'maiden name' was outdated. Here's a selection of your views...

**Victoria Louise House** Surname before married?

**Lynn Sharpe** I think single name would be less offensive.

**Meg Davis** Sounds typical of the Guardian. If you want to take offence at something, pick something really important like polygamy...

There was success at the end of October, after the Prime Minister announced that he would address the inequality on marriage certificates, enabling mothers' names to be included. This followed campaigning in parliament and on social media:

**@rinnywee** Victory for the #MothersOnMarriageCerts campaign!

**@thisisrgg** [I] recently applied for banns of marriage and felt it odd they only wanted to know about our fathers.

**@BettyGarli** Get Mums the recognition they deserve!

**@bull** Some things are so blindingly obvious they shouldn't need a vote to validate them, but...

**@DickiJames** It's ridiculous to have such an archaic system here.

And some other genealogy talk from social media...

**@HistoryAngels** Favourite name today – Bathsheba Bince, of Writhlington, Somerset. A welcome change after a lot of William and Marys!

**@designerofsound** I just found out that I am 2.7% Neanderthal. #Neanderthal #DNA

**@MrsPruneda** I have a tree that I had been working on for two years. Last night I found the proof I needed that they were not my kin. It is well sourced with records. Should I leave the tree on Ancestry or take [it] down?

**@billytagg** Descendants research is crucial to success in genealogy. Find people with the same/similar names in an area and you'll find your ancestors.

**@NavyRecords** We are on a mission to uncover previously unpublished letters/postcards/photo albums relating to the Battle of Jutland. Help!

page, as the site has many images of records that he can browse through but have not yet been indexed.

Once he knows which sites he has free access to then he can look at the others to see if they have a pay as you go payment option, and which site (if any) he wants to subscribe to. I would like to emphasise that the number of records

now online, although apparently vast, probably covers less than 1% of records available in the archive offices.

If he is interested I run an online course which teaches you how to use some of these free websites, the details are on: [www.leavesfamilyhistory.co.uk/courses.html](http://www.leavesfamilyhistory.co.uk/courses.html).

**ANNE SHERMAN, VIA EMAIL**





## Website reaches 500,000-record milestone for hospital admissions and discharges

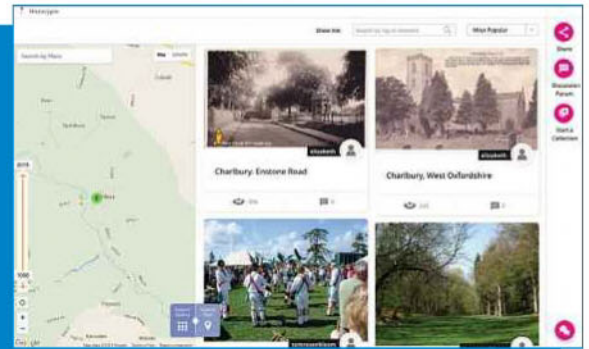
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## HAVE YOU SEEN... historypin.org

Each month we look at a useful website you might not know about



Historypin.org first launched in 2010, with the help of funding from Google and other partners. It provides a "digital platform for communities anywhere in the world to gather and share photos, documents, sounds, moving images, stories and oral histories relating to their local history".

Over time its user-generated content has built up into a fascinating resource, with hundreds of thousands of old photographs and other resources which build up a fascinating online archive of local heritage. There are many community projects hosted at the site, so, for example, you can explore a Potteries Tile Trail based

around Stoke-on-Trent, look at more than 100 old photographs of 'Frome through time' or even plot the 'emotional geography of Victorian London' through extracts of period writings associated with specific places.

The site has just had a major revamp, too. It has a new look, and now all 'pins' (ie associations between a document or other media and a specific location) form part of 'collections' - these might just be for your own local history research, or as part of a collaborative project like those mentioned above. There's also a new community forum to share ideas with other users. Overall it's a fascinating way to explore history through place.

sometimes additional medical observations.

The data also reveals the range and frequency of specific illnesses and injuries sustained. Conditions such as trench foot and mustard gas poisoning were commonly endured, but the records show some of the lesser-known causes of agony, and shed light on some of the extraordinary medical procedures borne out of necessity.

The 10 most common conditions in the data are: pyrexia (fever of unknown origin); inflammation of connective tissue; trench foot; influenza; scabies; shrapnel; gunshot wound; mustard and chlorine gas poisoning; diarrhoea, and rheumatism.

This resource has already helped various users past brick walls in their research. Keith Adams, for example, told the site: "I found my grandfather, Albert Alexander Adams (No 17500 DCLI) in the records for No 3 CCS [casualty

clearing station]. This has enabled me to pull together a part of his story... and enabled me to search the correct war diary... So this meant I knew where grandfather had been when he was wounded for the first time."

Anyone injured on the battlefield typically had to endure a complex journey via a Regimental Aid Post near the trenches, then perhaps a field ambulance to a CCS, and thence possibly to a general or stationary hospital. The latter were usually situated near a railway line, providing quicker transportation back to Britain for those needing further treatment or being discharged.

Forces War Records now has something in the region of eight million military records, with ongoing projects including the 1861 and 1871 Worldwide Army Indexes, and a new feature in the pipeline to plot the routes of military regiments during battle. ■

## TheGenealogist announces a host of releases for 2016

New family tree software and data on the way

**D**ata website [TheGenealogist.co.uk](http://TheGenealogist.co.uk) has announced its plans for the new year, which include a wide variety of data releases.

One of the key updates is a major new release of the site's TreeView software. Currently available through the website and for tablets and smartphones, the updated program will also have standalone versions for PCs and Macs.

TreeView allows users to record their family's history and view ancestors' details in a number of different ways, including a multi-generational pedigree chart, an hourglass chart and a fan chart. GEDCOM files can be imported and exported and the program will synchronise with the online version at



TreeView has had a major update and will work on all common platforms

TheGenealogist's website.

Meanwhile, new data expected at the site in the new year includes millions more parish records and detailed colour county and tithe maps which can be tagged to show exactly where ancestors lived.

The site is also expanding its collections of passenger lists and other emigration records, along with World War 2 prisoner of war records, more electoral registers and improved interfaces. ■



## Data update

Our latest round-up of data releases

### ANCESTRY.CO.UK

Recent additions include wills of Irish soldiers who died in the British army, 1897-1922; electoral registers for Perth and Kinross in Scotland, 1832-1961; and links to the Register of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902.

### DECEASEDONLINE.COM

The site has completed its one million-strong collection of records from Lewisham Borough Council, now including Hither Green and Brockley cemeteries.

### FAMILYSEARCH.ORG

Parish registers for Dorset, the Isle of Man and Warwickshire.

### FINDMYPAST.CO.UK

More than 327,000 marriage allegations and bonds from the Dioceses of Lichfield & Coventry, covering parts of Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire and Warwickshire; plus more baptisms and burials for north west Kent and burials for Auckland, County Durham.

### AND OFFLINE...

[www.genealogysupplies.com](http://www.genealogysupplies.com) has released East Cheshire: Past and Present (volumes covering 1877 and 1880), with information on parishes including Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Cheadle and Stockport.

Sussex Family History Group ([www.sfhg.org.uk](http://www.sfhg.org.uk)) has put every article from its Sussex Family Historian Journal from 1973 to 2013 on CD.



Mabel Capper and fellow suffragettes presenting a petition in 1911. Inset: details of her various arrests in Ancestry's new data

# Scots and Suffragettes

Ancestry's latest releases include important probate equivalents

**A**ncestry.co.uk's latest data releases include an important collection of Scottish probate equivalents, and records of the arrests of suffragettes.

The Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories 1876-1936 (at <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=60558>) is the Scottish counterpart to the post-1858 National Probate Calendar for England and Wales. This collection includes an index and images for annually published lists of confirmations (similar

to probate records south of the border) and include a testament and inventory of the estates in question. The former is the court record ordering distribution of the deceased's estate. Some included wills (testaments) although it was more common, and not everyone filed a testament, settling moveable property within the family. Wealthy people were more likely to have filed a testament. If you find your ancestor, the actual testaments and inventories can be ordered via [www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk).

Meanwhile, Ancestry has

also teamed up with The National Archives to release 1300 records of suffragettes arrested in the fight for equal voting rights, aptly timed with the film *Suffragette*, recently in cinemas.

The collection covers the period 1906-1914, and many well-known names such as Emmeline and Sylvia Pankhurst are included, along with male campaigners such as Hugh Franklin.

The records detail the names of those arrested for the cause, along with the places and number of times they were arrested. ■



# FOLLOW YOUR FAMILY HISTORY AROUND THE GLOBE

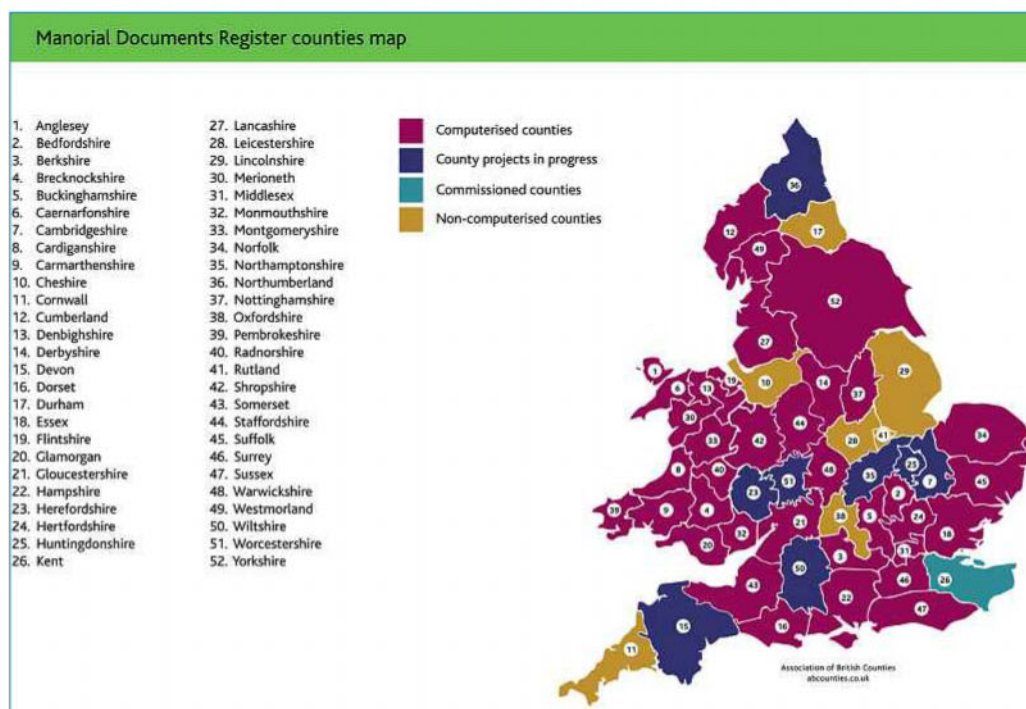


Our immigration & travel records reveal 200 years of history across the globe. Discover the journeys that shaped your family through our UK Passenger Lists – Incoming and Outgoing, plus millions of records from the USA, Australia and more.

 **ancestry.co.uk** WHO WILL YOU DISCOVER?







The current coverage of the Manorial Documents Register – eight more counties (in dark blue) are currently in progress

## TNA rolls Manorial Documents Register into Discovery engine

Mission to create one-stop-shop historical search engine continues

**T**he Manorial Documents Register (MDR) is the latest database to be fully absorbed into The National Archives' Discovery search system.

The MDR identifies the nature and location of manorial records for England and Wales. It provides brief descriptions of documents and details of their locations in public and private hands. Manorial records include court rolls, surveys, maps, terriers and all other documents relating to the boundaries, franchises, wastes, customs or

courts of a manor.

Originally a paper-based register, the MDR is gradually being updated and made available online. The online version is much more detailed and accurate than the original indexes, enabling researchers to search for manorial records by manor, parish, type of record, or by date, and identifying the relevant records.

The old interface has now been retired and these records can be found via <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search>.

The aim of incorporating

the register into Discovery is to increase its visibility and make the service more accessible to all users. Unlike other services recently rolled into Discovery, the MDR has its own landing page for legal reasons and to keep its identity as a specific project.

Users can filter manorial document searches by date and repository and also sort by reference, title and date.

Manorial data for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire is the latest expected to be added by the end of this year, with Wiltshire to be added in early 2016. ■

## Archive news

The Hartlepool Mail newspaper has donated its archive to Hartlepool Council's Museum Service. The collection includes 30,000 photographs and dates back to the 1880s. The Heritage Lottery Fund has given £100,000 to a project in Argyll and Bute to catalogue, conserve and digitise the papers of 64 Argyllshire families and estates. The British Library has meanwhile bought the archives of the D'Oyly Carte Theatre Company, founded in 1878 to perform the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. The collection will be available to the public in 2017. ■

## Gaelic heritage

A former anti-aircraft operations room in the Wester Ross village of Gairloch has been awarded £36,200 of Heritage Lottery Fund money to become the new home for Gairloch and District Heritage Museum from 2019. Its holdings include the first Pictish stone to be found on the west coast of mainland Scotland, and extensive Gaelic language and literature resources. ■

## Be on TV

BBC1's Family Finders is looking to hear from people who have lost touch with loved ones, or have sought-after relatives they've never met, specifically first cousins or closer. Call 01273 224 800 or email [familyfinders@ricochet.co.uk](mailto:familyfinders@ricochet.co.uk) if you can help. Meanwhile Wall to Wall, the company behind Who Do You Think You Are?, is recruiting people for a new 'living history' programme where participants would live in the context of 1870s East End London. If you fancy pie and mash or poverty, see <http://bit.ly/1MHAQkM>. ■

### SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

DNA testing firms in the USA, including 23andMe and Ancestry, have revealed they have been contacted by police wanting individuals' DNA data. Are you concerned about DNA privacy in the UK? Have your say on our Facebook page, at [www.facebook.com/yourfamilytreemaguk](http://www.facebook.com/yourfamilytreemaguk)

## EXHIBITION: Let them view cake

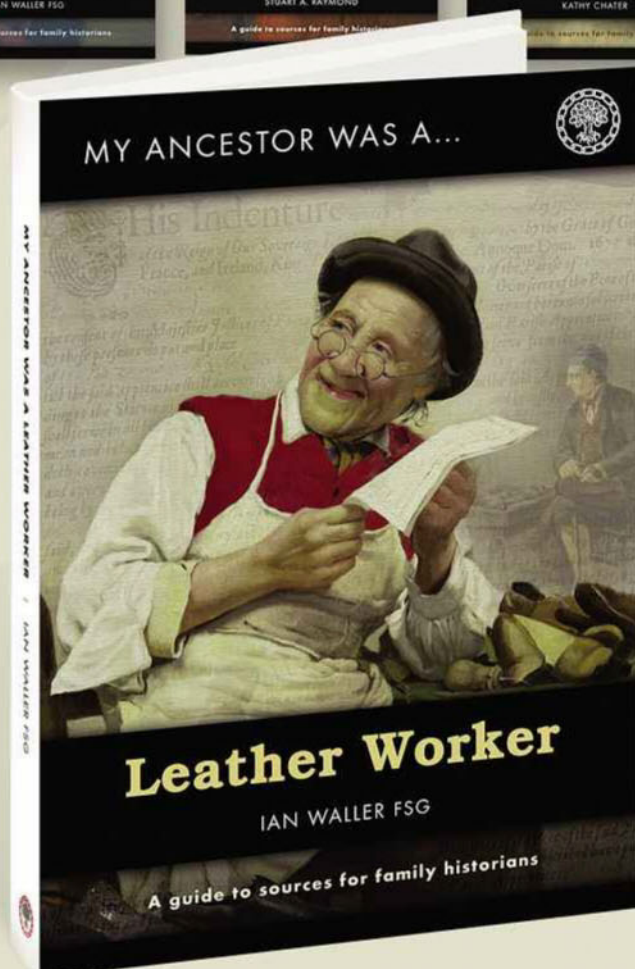
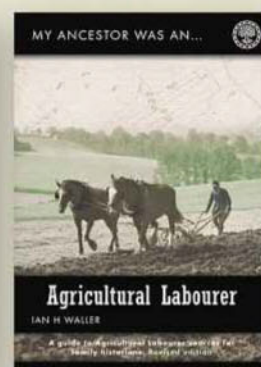
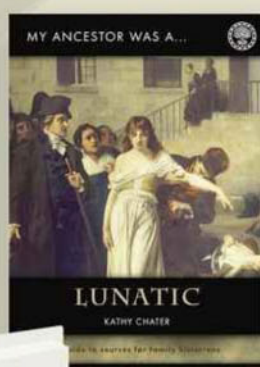
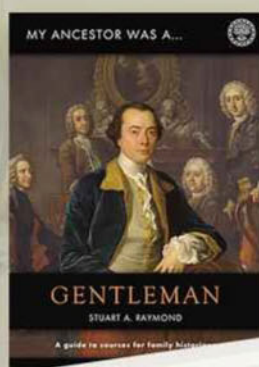
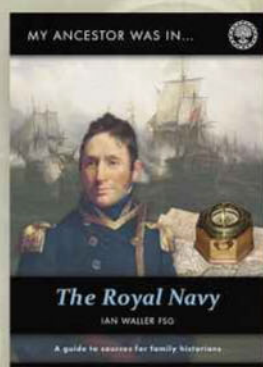
The European cultural heritage portal Europeana has teamed up with the Google Cultural Institute to present a new virtual exhibition. It explores the European history and culture of... cake. 'Cake? Cake!' can be found online (for free) at [www.bit.ly/eucake](http://www.bit.ly/eucake). Using archival photographs and other illustrations, it

explores the role cake has played over the centuries. You can learn about everything from what the Romans hid in their pastries at New Year to how cake became a central part of people's lives in the 19th century. There's more on the social history of food in Europe to be found at [www.foodanddrinkeurope.eu](http://www.foodanddrinkeurope.eu). ■





# Publications



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# The magnificent woman in her flying machine

Find out about a female pioneer in the early days of flying, with **Nick Thorne**

**W**hen we think of the early days of flight, the tendency is to recall those awe-inspiring men in their flimsy flying machines made of little more than wood and fabric. But it should be remembered that women were also flying pioneers.

A photograph of Mrs Cheridah de Beauvoir Stocks, in TheGenealogist's Image Archive, raised the question about who the first lady pilots in Britain were. The picture shows Mrs Stocks on her aeroplane, meeting Jumbo the *Daily Mirror* elephant – one of two elephants imported into Britain to publicise the

newspaper. This intriguing picture of perhaps the first Jumbo on the runway, was the starting point for researchers at TheGenealogist to discover more about this intrepid young lady's identity.

Cheridah was born Cheridah Annie Ernst on 6 November 1887 in Evercreech, Somerset, the daughter of magistrate and landowner Henry Ernst, and his wife Annie (née Waring).

In the 1891 census, we can see that Cheridah's family were slightly unconventional – while Cheridah was a child in her third year, and her mother was just 30 years old, her father was at this time 63.

By the 1901 census,



The photo of the aviator and the elephant that started a search for more information

the young Cheridah was listed as a guest at the swanky Hotel Metropole on Northumberland Avenue, London with her sister Bessie and her mother, who was, by now, widowed. In a remarkable coincidence this hotel was at one time the base for the Aero Club, whose members shared a passion with the grown-up Cheridah.

When Cheridah was 18, in 1909, she got married to David de Beauvoir Stocks in London. From the indexes on TheGenealogist, we can see that the wedding was registered in the smart

district of St George Hanover Square.

## SUBMARINE TRAGEDY

Her husband, David, was a naval officer. Sadly, after less than nine years of marriage, Commander Stocks died on 31 January 1918. His submarine, HMS K4, was lost in an accident during the night-time fleet exercises that became known as the Battle of May Island. The K4 was attached to the 13th Submarine Flotilla, and while attempting to avoid a collision with K3, she became the victim of collisions with K6 and K7. HMS K4 was lost with all hands.

Find » Civil Registration Births 1837-2005 » Full

*Birth Record for Cheridah Annie Ernst in the District of Shepton Mallet*

Name	Cheridah Annie Ernst
District	Shepton Mallet, Somerset
Page	401
Volume	5C
Registered	October - December 1887

Cheridah was a magistrate's daughter from Somerset, as this birth record shows

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Census Transcript Household London 1901									
Address		Hotel Metropole, Northumberland Avenue							
Parish		St Martin in the Fields							
Registration District		Strand							
Image Reference		R01310242.F1							
Found 4 Results									
Forename	Surname	Age	Year Born	Relation	Birth Place	Occupation			
Josephine	MacLure	53	1848	Head	Portugal	Portugal R.E.			
Annie	Ernst	34	1867		Carlisle, Cumberland				
Bertha May	Ernst	13	1887	Daughter	Westcombe Evercreech, Somerset				
Cheridah Annie	Ernst	13	1888	Daughter	Westcombe Evercreech, Somerset				

Hotel guest: the 1901 census lists Cheridah's location as a swish London hotel

Find > Civil Registration Marriages, 1837-2005 > Full

*Marriage Record for Cheridah Annie Ernst  
in the District of St George Hanover Square*

Name	Cheridah Annie Ernst
District	St George Hanover Square, London
Spouse	David De Beauvoir Stocks
Page	0969
Volume	1A
Registered	April - June 1909

This marriage index tells us that Cheridah married in her teens

A search of the indexes of World War 1 deaths on TheGenealogist finds Commander Stock's death.

In the years before World War 1 and this tragedy, Cheridah Stocks made a name for herself by becoming an aviator. The photograph of the glamorous lady aviator with the *Daily Mirror*'s young elephant was obviously a publicity shot designed to catch the public's eye. A search of TheGenealogist's occupation collection finds this pioneering woman flyer within the pilots' records.

## EXHILARATING PAST-TIME

Many of the early female pilots were from the strata of society that could easily afford their exhilarating new

Stocks, Cheridah de 153 Nov. 7 '11

Aviators' licences such as Cheridah's confirm the occupation or interests of our flying ancestors

past-time, and Cheridah was no exception. She trained at the Grahame-White flying school at Hendon and became only the second British woman to be awarded her Royal Aero Club aviator's certificate – following fellow British woman Hilda Hewlett. It was on 7 November 1911 that Cheridah Stocks achieved this milestone, passing her test using a Farman biplane at Hendon. At the time, she was only 24.

The inspiring lady pilot then became a regular competitor at the various air meets and races at Hendon,

Overseas > WW1 Deaths > Full

Forename	David De B (D S O)
Surname	Stocks
Ship or Unit	SHM K 4
Year	1915
Military Service	Naval Ratings
Page Number	141
Volume	Rno
Volume Page	141

You can order this certificate from the GRO / Identity & Passport Service here

David tragically died during World War 1, after just nine years of marriage

Occupation > Pilots > Full

Name	Stocks, Cheridah De Beauvoir
Certificate Number	153
Date Granted	7th November 1911
Record	Aviators Certificates
Source	Royal Aero Club 1924-1926
	71
Biography	Lady aviator, piloting Henry Farman biplanes and 50 h.p. Gnome Blériot monoplanes, wife of Lieut. D. de Beauvoir Stocks, R.N., qualified for brevet No. 153, November 7th, 1911, on H. Farman biplane at Hendon. Won Daily Mail Trophy Ladies' Day, Hendon (July 6th, 1912), met with serious accident at Hendon, when flying as passenger with Sydney Pickles, afterwards retired from flying.

Cheridah made her name as a pilot – and occupational records can tell us more about this

often flying her Blériot monoplane, or co-flying with male friends in other aeroplanes. It was whilst airborne with one of her fellow pilots that the incident which would bring the end of her flying career occurred. In 1913, just two years after she had obtained her prized aviator's certificate, she was flying with pilot Sydney Pickles when their plane spun out of control. The pair crash-landed, with Pickles smashing up his leg. A seriously injured Cheridah Stocks was taken to the Central London Sick Asylum, where she remained unconscious for several days – her predicament being followed by the general public in the newspapers.

## ANTHROPOLOGY

When she finally recovered, Cheridah was paralysed down her right hand side. Flying was no longer an option for her, although she remained interested in aviation for the rest of her life. She now forged a new career as an anthropologist, going on to study at Oxford in the 1920s, where she gained a BSc in Social Anthropology. This trailblazing woman

“

A seriously injured Cheridah was taken to the Central London Sick Asylum, where she remained unconscious for days

died on 1 May 1971 in Northampton, aged 83.

From a picture found on TheGenealogist's fascinating Image Archive and then using the birth, marriages and death records, plus census and occupational collections on the site, we were easily able to trace this pioneering female aviator and to discover that she effectively gained her 'wings' in 1911, when she was awarded the Royal Aero Club's Aviator's Certificate number 153. TheGenealogist's powerful keyword search allows researchers to easily build their ancestors' stories using the rich resources found on the website, simply by specifying a few keywords to refine their results. ■



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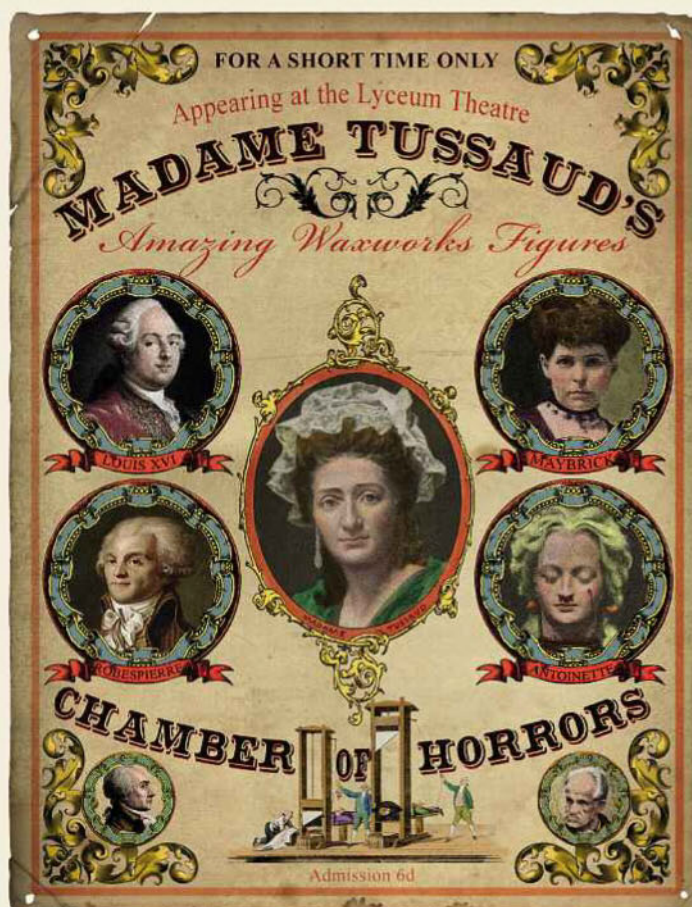


1 DECEMBER 1761

# Birth of Madame Tussaud

**R**esponsible for the crowds that wind their way down to Baker Street tube station, especially at a weekend, Madame Tussaud was born in Strasbourg in 1761, to a widowed mother, Anne-Marie, and named Marie. Her father, Joseph Grosholtz, had died two months before her birth, fighting as part of the Seven Years' War. Anne-Marie took her baby daughter to Bern, Switzerland, where she found work as a housekeeper to support herself and her child. Anne-Marie's employer was a wax sculptor named Philippe Curtius who demonstrated anatomy through his sculptures. When Curtius moved to Paris to open an exhibition of wax portraits, Anne-Marie and Marie soon moved there as well, and Curtius taught the young Marie to model figures in wax, too. Her first figure was of Voltaire and, until the Revolution of 1789, she produced portraits of contemporary celebrities.

Marie became involved in the French Revolution, to the extent that she narrowly escaped the guillotine. In 1795, she married Francois Tussaud and became known as Madame Tussaud. In 1802, she moved to London and exhibited her work at the Lyceum Theatre. She did not make much money, but was unable to return to France due to the Napoleonic Wars, and so settled in London. In 1835, she established a permanent exhibition in Baker Street, in what was known as the Baker Street Bazaar. When she died in 1850, aged 88, her son Francois became her exhibition's chief artist, and Madame Tussaud's is now one of London's major tourist attractions, as well as expanding into several different countries. ■



Her first figure was of Voltaire and, until the Revolution of 1789, she produced portraits of contemporary celebrities

11 DECEMBER 1936

## Edward VIII abdicates

To his supporters, he had been 'hounded from the throne'; to his detractors, he was an embarrassment after starting a relationship with an American divorcee. On 11 December 1936, Edward VIII, speaking from Windsor Castle, made a BBC radio broadcast where he formally announced his abdication. He was introduced as 'HRH Prince Edward'; his speech had been tweaked by Churchill in advance. The day after his broadcast was made, Edward left Britain, no longer king, after a reign of just 327 days. He was one of the shortest reigning kings in British history.

# What's on...

Find out about anniversaries and events in December and January with our diary

1 DECEMBER

## Using Newspapers for Family History Research

The North of Ireland Family History Society (NIFHS) is holding a session on how to use newspapers in your family history research, with tutor Mike McKeag. The session will take place at the

Honeyman Room of the NIFHS Research Centre in Newtownabbey between 11am and 12.30pm, and will show how you can discover stories, and understand the context in which your ancestors lived their lives, through the pages of the papers. The cost is £5

for NIFHS members (£10 otherwise), and you can book via <http://www.nifhs.org/resources/courses/#unfhr>.

6 DECEMBER

## Christmas at War

This family activity at St Fagans National History Museum near Cardiff lets you

find out what the celebrations were like in World War 1, both for frontline troops, and those left behind on the Home Front. Make wartime decorations and cards between 11am and 1pm, or 2pm and 4pm. For more information, see <http://tinyurl.com/pcc4gzz>.



## INSIDE THE SoG by Else Churchill

# "A fascination with our ancestry is something very deep within us"

Else looks at how much the personal family history experience means to us, and how we can preserve our history for others

I recently attended what turned out to be a very interesting workshop at The National Archives (TNA), organised by the Family Archive Project.

The project brings together a year of interdisciplinary research by academics from Leeds, Cardiff, Birmingham, UCL and Royal Holloway universities, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), to explore what sort of things go into family archives and what those things say about the families that collect them. The workshop created three focus groups from communities in Barnsley, Leeds and Birmingham to try to establish what members of the public hold on to (or not) from their families' pasts and how they pass on their family history through curated possessions – including documents, images, objects and other heirlooms and stories. The workshop was aimed at archivists, museums curators, librarians, researchers, academics and

students and anyone interested in family collections and histories.

Now it's nice when the academics recognise my world but I'm not especially sure the team were aware of the huge collaborative community of family historians that exists today, with thousands of family history blogs and genealogy websites existing where family histories and genealogies are recorded. By bringing together archaeologists, classicists and social historians, the project was more than aware that a fascination with families and our ancestry is something very deep within us – from the Roman and Anglo-Saxon heirlooms discovered in grave goods and temples, to diaries and family papers lodged in local libraries. One example is the Leeds Local and Family History library, which cites itself as the unofficial family archive of a city. The project has produced some interesting thought pieces on its blog (at <http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/>

[familyarchive/about-the-project/](http://familyarchive/about-the-project/)) but some of the conclusions drawn do seem to me as somewhat obvious – admittedly for one who is so close to the personal family history experience. It's not such a surprise to me that a family archive memory is so often preserved by the women in the family.

The workshop introduced me to the Yarn website ([www.yarncommunity.com](http://www.yarncommunity.com)) – another ARHC-funded online community storytelling and archival platform. It is designed for anyone to use to develop their own family research, collect materials and build their own archive to tell the story. With guaranteed funding for at least five years, this project ensures that contributors always retain ownership of their information and stories.

Of course, I was happy to talk about the huge family history archives that the Society of Genealogists has developed and cared for over 100 years. Our collections include thousands of bound family histories and

biographies. The Society's manuscript research notes contain copious extracts from records, copies of letters, diaries, pedigrees photos and all the typical ephemera found in any personal family archive. The Special Collections are the lifetime's work of genealogists who have researched thousands of families. The Society's website ([www.sog.org.uk/learn/share-your-knowledge](http://www.sog.org.uk/learn/share-your-knowledge)) gives guidance to anyone who wants to deposit family history research safely in the Library to ensure the family archive remains intact – even if your family aren't particularly interested, at the moment, in preserving or continuing the work. ■

### By Else Churchill



Else is the Genealogist at the Society of Genealogists.

For more information about the Society, go to [www.sog.org.uk](http://www.sog.org.uk).



#### 9 DECEMBER

### The 1939 Register

We've covered it in this month's issue – but what if you want to find out even more about the 1939 Register? You can head to the Society of Genealogists, who have Findmypast's Myko Clelland in to give a lecture on The 1939 Register: The Home Front From Your Own Home. The lecture is from 11am to midday, and

costs £8. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/npunwqa> for more information or to book.

#### 12 DECEMBER

### Old Parish Registers

Bruce Bishop will talk at the Scottish Genealogy Society in Edinburgh about what these Scots records contain and how they can assist your research – including OPRs not online. See <http://bit.ly/1M7oGzx> for details.

#### 16 DECEMBER

### Family History Advice

Aimed at those who have some family history experience already, Glasgow's Mitchell Library is offering Family History Advice sessions between 2pm and 4pm – sessions of up to 30 minutes can be booked. For more information, see <http://tinyurl.com/oktp2g>.

#### 1 JANUARY 2016

### Beginners Guide

Pharos Tutors are starting a three-week online course offering a Beginners' Guide to Creating and Researching Your Family Tree. The course costs £22.99, is written in association with Findmypast, and is aimed at those who have recently started, or are thinking about starting, their research. More details: <http://bit.ly/1Wpnmch>.



# Broadcasting history

Christmas special conjures up medical life in the 1950s

**D**ecember means Christmas specials all over the television schedules – and this year is no different. Currently due to transmit on BBC One on Christmas Day is the *Call The Midwife* Christmas special, conjuring up another slice of life in the 1950s and 1960s.

The series focuses on a group of nurse midwives working in the East End of London, and originated with the memoirs of Jennifer Worth (1935–2011). Jennifer (née Lee) was an Essex-born nurse, who trained at the Royal Berkshire Hospital before undertaking midwifery training in London. In the early 1950s, she worked at the London Hospital in Whitechapel, and then at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in Bloomsbury. Whilst at the London Hospital, she lived with a group of Anglican nuns and with them, worked with the poor. She retired from nursing in 1973, but later began writing her life



BBC/Neal Street Productions/Nery Johnson

story. *Call The Midwife*, the first volume of her memoirs, was published in 2002, but it was when it was resissued in 2007 that it became a bestseller. Three more volumes – *Shadows of the Workhouse*, *Farewell to the East End*, and *In The Midst Of Life* – followed. She stated that her aim with her memoirs was to help to preserve an old way of life – the people and the poverty of the East End. She felt that the area in the 1950s was home to great characters; but she also wanted to highlight the problems in the area, saying that people were not aware of the realities of life

in the East End: “There was no law, no lighting, bedbugs and fleas.” Her memoirs, then, were different to the usual nostalgic trips into the past – they were an absorbing social history of East London. They highlighted postwar transformations, as slum clearances and the redevelopment of the city changed the face of the city, without tackling the problems of poverty. The lives of the working class communities in the East End were explored and detailed,

alongside the picture of nursing in postwar Britain.

For more information about the BBC series, see [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0118t80](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0118t80). ■



Her memoirs highlighted postwar transformations, as slum clearances changed the face of the city



Jennifer Worth, 1935–2011

## MORE MEMOIRS

Jennifer Worth, *Call the Midwife: A True Story of the East End in the 1950s* (W&N, 2012)

Jacky Hyams, *Bombsites and Lollipops: My 1950s East End Childhood* (John Blake, 2011)

Sheena Byrom, *Catching Babies: A Midwife's Tale* (Headline, 2011)

Norman Jacobs, *Pie 'n' Mash & Prefabs: My 1950s Childhood* (John Blake, 2015)

## TV past

We look at the programmes we watched in the past...

Credit: Edwards



In 1961, Mrs Wilhelmina Sterling and her house became famous. Wilhelmina, at the time a 96-year-old, frail, woman, was living in a house in Wandsworth at 30 Vicarage Crescent. It was not an ordinary house, though. Known as Old Battersea House (pictured), it was home to a large collection of Pre-Raphaelite art (Wilhelmina's sister being the Pre-Raphaelite painter Evelyn de Morgan). In 1961, the BBC's Monitor programme showed a 17 minute film, directed by

Ken Russell, that followed Wilhelmina taking tourists round her house, and describing modern art as 'ghastly monstrosities, only fit to hang in the lunatic asylum.' The programme was a look not only at art, but also at a way of life that was becoming history: Wilhelmina, born in 1865, had a manservant named Mr Peters, who carried a lamp around on tours so that the darker corners of the house could be seen. To watch clips from the programme, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ndsotc8>.

## Behind the TV history

The Richard Burton version is the best known, but this month we look at an earlier televised version of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that caused political concern

On 12 December 1954, a year after a radio production of it was aired, the BBC transmitted a version of George Orwell's dystopian classic, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The play caused outrage amongst some MPs, who thought it was too violent and who objected to its scenes of torture. They debated it in parliament, but this did not stop the play being repeated in a second, live, transmission on 16 December 1954. The controversy increased its popularity – more people listened to the second broadcast than the first.

Most programmes for the BBC at the time were undertaken live; but parts of this play were filmed and incorporated into the live performance as inserts. Location shooting included exterior scenes that showed Winston Smith's travels in the proletarian sector; the run-through for the actual transmission was undertaken on 11 December at the BBC's Lime Grove Studios.

Its place in the televisual canon was sealed when, at the Royal Society of Arts, Prince Philip commented that he and the Queen had watched the play, and "thoroughly enjoyed it". This was despite alarmist newspaper coverage, which included a tale of how one 'wife' in Kent had collapsed and died from the shock of watching the production.

The play was adapted by Nigel Kneale (who, the year before, had created *The Quatermass Experiment*) and produced by Rudolph Cartier. Winston Smith was played by Peter Cushing, and Donald Pleasence played Syme.

### RECOMMENDED READING

Robert Collis, *George Orwell: English Rebel* (OUP, 2015)

Simon Adams, *Wartime Propaganda: Manipulating the Truth* (Heinemann, 2006)

David Edwards and David Cromwell, *Newspeak in the 21st Century* (Pluto Press, 2009)

## The Face of Britain on DVD

Simon Schama's latest is out now

The Face of Britain, historian Simon Schama's latest BBC Two series, which aired in September, is out now on DVD. In it, Schama joins up with curators at the National Portrait Gallery to look at the development of British portraiture, and to see how a nation's power is reflected through its portraits. Rather than look at portraits chronologically, Schama takes a thematic approach, that takes in politics, satire and photography. He argues that reading faces helps us to navigate the world we live in. You can buy *The Face of Britain* at <http://tinyurl.com/pnr328h> and other outlets.



Credit: BBC Oxford/ThamesTV



# FAMILY SNAPSHOTS

We want to share your vintage photographs with everyone. This month we go back to World War 2 with two very different photos



**W**e all have family photos at home. Some are carefully placed in dust-free albums and others are just stuffed in drawers, away from prying eyes. Here's the great thing – people love to view and share old photographs! There are a staggering amount online – often with very little information – on social sites such as Flickr or Pinterest ([www.pinterest.com/yourfamilytree/vintage-photos](http://www.pinterest.com/yourfamilytree/vintage-photos)).

This issue, we have two wartime black and white photos showing Sheila Styring's father. Remember, this monthly feature is all about your favourite snaps. Send us your photo, with a brief 50-word explanation, and we'll do our best to get it into the magazine. It could be a specific place or just a random image you've picked up along the way. What are you waiting for? ■

## ARP WARDENS

"You can see how tired the men were after having been out all night, and then doing their day jobs afterwards. My father is sitting bottom right in this photo, and the man behind him had escaped from the Channel Islands," writes Sheila.

Sheila's father was James Bardsley; there is writing on the back of the photograph that identifies three of the other men as Frank Foley, Mr Norman and Mr Richardson. The photograph was taken in Davenport, Stockport.

ARP (Air Raid Precautions) were designed to protect civilians from air-raids. In April 1937, the government created the Air Raid Wardens' Service and started recruiting volunteers as Air Raid Precautions wardens. They patrolled the streets during blackouts, looking for any visible lights and ensuring that local people covered their windows securely or turned lights off. They handed out gas masks, helped man public air raid shelters, and reported bomb damage. Of the 1.5 million ARP wardens in Britain, most volunteered part-time whilst also holding down full-time jobs. Each volunteer was supposed to work three nights a week, but this could increase during times of heavy bombing.



## UNIFORMS

This photo was taken in 1941, and by this point, ARP Wardens were in uniform. At the start of World War 2, there was no set uniform, and wardens wore their own clothes. However, they did have a steel helmet (with a 'W' on it), boots and an armband. It was only in May 1941 that wardens were given their own uniform of blue serge outfits.

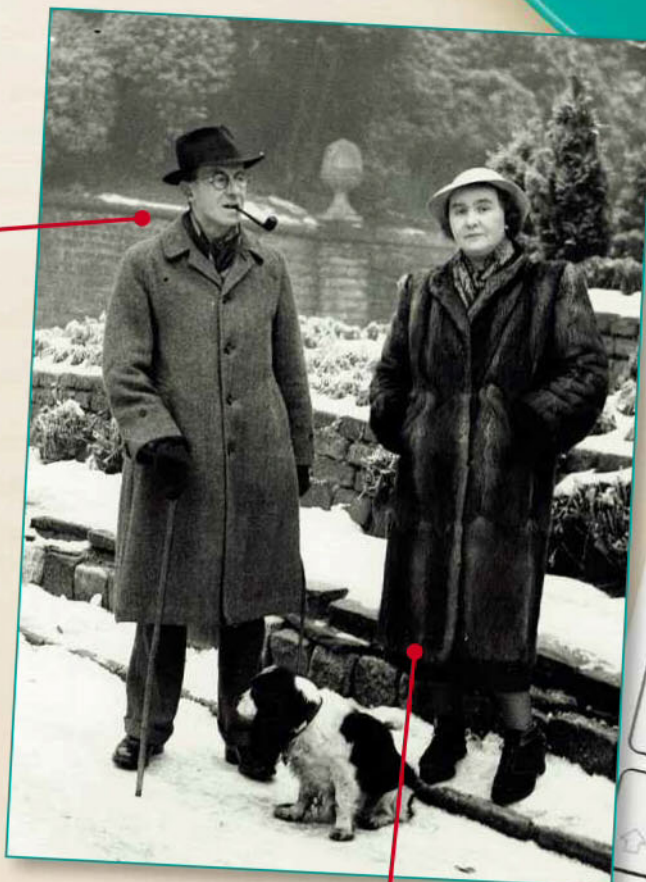


## CIVILIAN LIFE

Sheila's other photograph shows her father James, known as Jim, a bit later, in the early 1950s. Here he is with his wife Decima, née Bannister (1904-1995), who, contrary to her name, was not a tenth child, but a sixth! Jim and Decima married in Cheshire in 1929; this photograph shows a couple who, although now in middle age, still transmit an air of glamour and style despite their snowy surroundings.

## PIPE SMOKING

In both of Sheila's photographs, Jim Bardsley is pictured with his pipe, suggesting that he was a regular smoker! Many of us will have seen in museums examples of clay pipes – smoked by Elizabethan, Tudor and Stuart ancestors. In the 19th century, pipe-smoking was seen as a civilized occupation of the Victorian gentleman, who would have retired to the smoking-room after dinner for a convivial smoke. By the 20th century, though, cigarettes were becoming far more popular, aided by mass production – and by the end of World War 1, the purchase of cigarettes exceeded that of pipe tobacco. Jim, however, continued to smoke his pipe into the 1970s, before switching to cigarettes.



## FUR COATS

It may raise an eyebrow today, but wearing a fur coat was a practical option in the mid-20th century. It was warm and a fur coat could last a long time – it was a sensible investment against the cold winters, as can be seen here. It also epitomised glamour – movies of the time showed stars wearing fur, and the fur coats of the 1940s featured padded shoulders, wide sleeves and beautiful linings. The Retrowaste website gives a fascinating look at the furs worn by women in the 1940s, including the options for those who could not afford the 'best' furs (<http://www.retrowaste.com/1940s/fashion-in-the-1940s/1940s-fur-coats/>).

## MESSENGER GIRL

The woman in the back row of this photo was Eileen Richardson. She was a messenger, who, in the absence of telephones, liaised between the wardens' posts. She was probably related to the Mr Richardson recorded on the back of the photograph.

ARP posts covered a certain area, divided into sectors, and there would have been between three and six wardens in each sector – local people who knew the area well. Boys and girls such as Eileen would have taken messages to and from the wardens in a local area, aiding them in their volunteer roles. Harry Earthy, recorded on the BBC People's War website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/41/a2125441.shtml>), remembers having to collect weekly newsletters from his town's chief warden and then having to deliver them to each head warden – on his bicycle, during blackouts.



# 1939 REGISTER



# GOES ONLINE

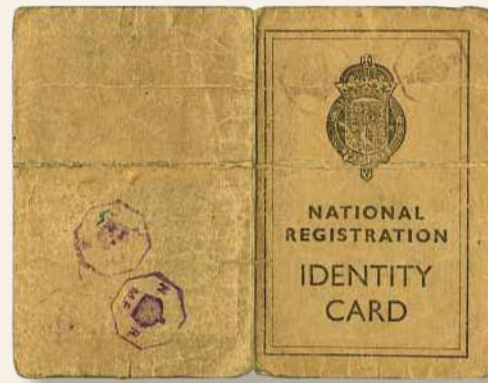
War is officially announced on 3 September 1939

The 1939 Register has been released – but why is it important, and what does it show? We take a look

It's been much anticipated – including by us – and now the 1939 Register is finally with us. Launched on 2 November by Findmypast, the project, which has seen 40 million wartime British records published online, has been gathering column inches since it was announced back in March 2014.

Findmypast has been working in association with The National Archives to provide the only complete overview of the population between 1922 and 1950. It is significant for genealogists because there is no census information between 1921 and 1951; the 1931 census records were destroyed and, due to the war, a census was not taken in 1941. Therefore, the register forms a substitute to the census, and offers valuable information to family historians about where their families were living, and who was in their household, as World War 2 was under way.

Prior to Findmypast's release, the 1939 Register was only available from a government website – the Health & Social Care Information Centre ([www.hscic.gov.uk](http://www.hscic.gov.uk)). This offered a 1939 Register Service that enabled people to request data held on the register, by completing a three-part application form and submitting a hard copy by post, together with a fee of £42. This fee was not refundable, even if an individual could not be found on the register. The service could only be used for individuals who were recorded as deceased, or where the applicant could provide 'clear evidence of death', and was limited to specific pieces of information, such as address, name, marital status and occupation. Searches would be responded to within 20 working days; so it is clear why Findmypast's 1939 Register search might be attractive to family historians desiring information immediately. However, it is not a free option, even to current subscribers, with a credits payment system being used (unlocking a household costs 60 credits, or £6.95, for example). You can, though, look at search results for free; if you then decide you want to see the full result, click on 'preview', and then 'unlock this household', at which point you will need to pay to access further information.



A National Registration identity card. These were brown until 1943, when blue versions were issued (government officials had green cards with a photograph)

## THE HISTORY OF THE REGISTER

The 1939 Register – the National Register, to give it its proper name – was taken on 29 September 1939. World War 2 had only recently started, and the government introduced an act that would enable it to get vital information about the population. This was a means of preparing for the worst – the information would be used in order to issue people with identity cards and ration books; the register was also used for conscription, and later as a basis for NHS records. *The Western Morning News* of 4 September described the National Registration Bill as the “most important” of a raft of new legislation, making explicit that the National Register would provide “up-to-date statistics of manpower and population generally to take the place of the 1931 census statistics”. *The News Chronicle* of 29 September warned readers on its front page that they “must register tonight”, filling in their National Registration Forms in order to receive, in exchange, an identity card for each person in their household who was listed on the form. It added, “that card may play an

## News from 1939: Warplane struck

On 29 September 1939, it was reported that a British ‘flying-boat’ had been forced down in Icelandic waters. Nine crew escaped internment at the port of Reykjavik and made their way back to Britain amidst allegations that they had broken their parole.



This register enabled the government to get vital information about the population

## The Registrar-General



Sir Sylvanus Vivian, the Registrar-General who oversaw the National Register process in 1939

Sir Sylvanus Percival Vivian, CB (1880-1958) was the Registrar-General between 1921 and 1945, and thus oversaw both the 1921 and 1931 censuses, as well as the 1939 register. He gave a broadcast on the night of 29 September, warning people to look after their identity cards. One would be given to every person registered, but it might take “some time yet, perhaps weeks” for them to be received. Vivian emphasised, “If you remove before receiving a ration book, you cannot expect it to follow you about like a pet lamb”. Instead, people should leave their new addresses behind if they moved, and arrange with the new residents of their house or flat to forward their ration books on to them. Vivian was himself listed as living at 76 Iverna Court, Kensington, a stone’s throw from the High Street Kensington tube, in 1939.



A school gas mask drill in Manchester, 1939



An original page image from the 1939 Register online, showing how certain records (for people still alive or who died after 1991) are redacted

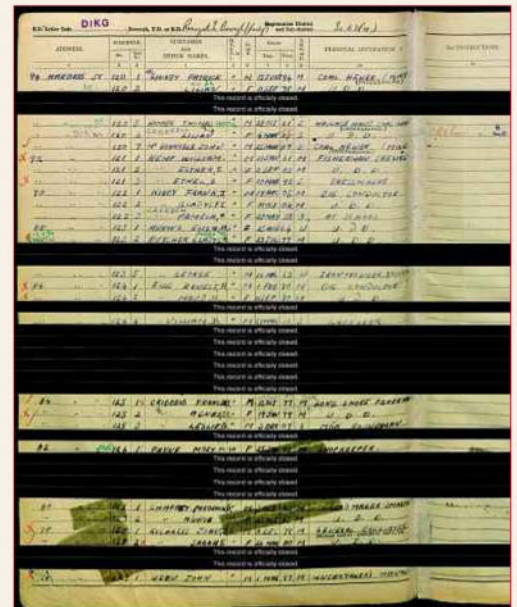


important part in ensuring your future requirements". On the night of the register being taken, the Registrar-General, Sir Sylvanus Vivian, gave two broadcasts to inform people as to what they needed to do.

The day after the registration day, the *News Chronicle* reflected concerns that many people may not have filled their forms:

"People who, for some reason or other, failed to fill in their national registration forms last night should do so immediately. There are special arrangements by which this can be done."

The newspaper noted that enumerators had called at some houses eight times, and that some had ignored their knocking. In other



Children being evacuated in 1939. Operation Pied Piper, which began on 1 September, officially relocated more than 3.5 million people



cases, people were genuinely out when the enumerator called, or simply had not received a form. The procedures in place to deal with this appear, in this technological age, rather unsatisfactory; people were told to "look out for" the enumerator on his travels, or, if they lived in a rural area, to "leave word with a neighbour" who may have received their form. Otherwise, and probably wisely, they could telephone the

# Top three: Other wartime sources

What other websites can help you track down WW2 lives?



## THE BRITISH NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE

**1** Although the British Newspaper Archive is best known for its 19th century newspapers, it also has a good range of newspapers online dating from the war years. Here, you can find stories about the register being taken, and the problems associated with it, from various provincial newspapers; the Yorkshire Evening Post of 27 September 1939, for example, warned that it was "imperative" that the householder stay at home all weekend to wait for the enumerator, as "cards are only issued after personal contact". [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)



## THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

**2** Invariably, naming a good source for records will involve TNA, and this is no exception. There are a range of records that can either be looked at online (such as the Allied Expeditionary Force papers of 1943-1945) or in person, such as the British Army unit war diaries for World War 2. An initial search through TNA may also bring up records that have been digitised by one of their partners, such as Findmypast or Ancestry.

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>



## VETERANS UK

**3** The Veterans UK website is a useful source of information about servicemen's records and how to access them. World War 2 service records are still held by the Ministry of Defence, but its website, Veterans UK, tells you how to request a summary of an individual's service record from it. It's worth bearing in mind, though, that these summaries are not available to members of the general public, but only to next of kin. Veterans UK details the records that are available – and those that are not.

[www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records](http://www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-service-records)



Children board a bus to take them to safety on 1 September, as war breaks out

## News from 1939: Windscreen label scam

A scam was underway in September 1939 regarding windscreen labels. Those working in civil defence were allowed to use labels giving them priority when driving, but so many people "purporting" to work in this area were putting labels on their cars that it "prevents them from having any practical effect".

local National Registration Office, or go there in person.

However, the completed forms were not allowed to be sent to a National Registration Office, but had to be handed into an enumerator

in person. It was estimated that by the start of October 1939, the 65,000 enumerators would each have filled in around 600 to 700 identity or ration cards in response to the completed registration forms.





# Dame Chronicle

## Hints on Filling Up National Register Schedule

PARTICULAR attention should be paid to a number of important points when filling in the National Register forms to-morrow.

This is the advice given by one of the registrars when interviewed by the "Press and Journal" yesterday.

Issue of schedules—If you have not got a schedule by this date, apply to a registrar's office. In Aberdeen the registrars' offices are at Union Terrace.

Collection of schedules—Enumerators will call for them to-morrow, Sunday or Monday. They will have to make out identity cards for each member of the household. Invite them indoors and give them facilities for writing.

**GIVE ALL THE DETAILS ASKED**  
Filling Schedules—It is a comparatively simple schedule, but all information sought must be given. Incorrect information may mean a penalty.

Details of every member of the household must be given in block letters.

Members on leave, scheduled and of the household, must be included. When a person has been absent for a long time, the enumerator should be told.

When food rationing begins, supplies, which are plentiful, will be equally shared at controlled prices to suit the small purse.

(Mr. W. S. Morrison, the Food Minister, broadcast on the subject last night. See Page Five.)

INC...  
HRS... table

# Chronicle

29, 1939

POSTAGE IN U.K. CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND ... 1d OTHER PLACES ABROAD 1d

For General & Gunner  
**ROLLS RAZOR**  
the ECONOMY RAZOR  
21/- 27/6

## BENTROP, TALKS

## ENUMERATORS' LITTLE TROUBLES

THE LEICESTER MERCURY, MONDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, 1939  
By MR. LEICESTER

THE LEICESTER MERCURY, MONDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, 1939  
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THE LEICESTER MERCURY, MONDAY, 2nd OCTOBER, 1939  
By MR. LEICESTER

## You Must Register Tonight

HOUSEHOLDERS must fill in their National Registration Forms to-night, giving the names and other particulars of all persons who are spending the night in their homes.

An identity card for each will be given in return.

General tonight

VS

Sends

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Bessarab...  
let bord...  
Reuter...

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U.S. Ambassador

orchester during

the night for an escaped prisoner

## SUBSIDIES FOR CEREALS ANNOUNCEMENT NEW SCHEME

Subsidies on oats and barley...  
August by the Department...  
bringing the total up to...  
will be made as soon as...  
The Department will...  
to 6,000 farmers...  
they...  
and apply...

## Did You Fill In Your Form?

PEOPLE who, for a reason or other, failed to fill in their national registration forms last night should do so immediately. There are special arrangements which this can be done. (See Page Five.)

## REGISTER FINDS FORGOTTEN MEN

NOBODY is being missed by the National Register.

Those forgotten men and women who try to sleep on the Embankment seats found the police particularly attentive last night.

Instead of the usual formula—"Wake up, there! You can't sleep on that seat!"—the down-and-outs found themselves shepherded to a room where they were registered.

Among the forgotten men are some who once possessed extreme ability.

"I know a schoolmaster, a doctor, two architects and a man who once owned a prosperous hotel," a welfare worker told the *Daily Mirror* last night. "They will all put themselves down on the form as 'labourers'."

## Did You Fill In That Registration Form?

you were not one of the millions in Britain who last night filled in their forms for the National Register, get busy at once.

One will be given to every person registered; it must be looked after with great care and should be carried about.

It may be some time yet, perhaps weeks, before the cards are ready.

Sir Sylvanus Vivian, the Registrar-General, emphasised in a broadcast last night: "If you remove before receiving a ration book, you cannot expect it to follow you about like a pet lamb."

Householders must leave their new addresses behind, and arrange to have ration books to be forwarded.

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The newspapers helped encourage people to fill in their register forms



## INFORMATION IN THE REGISTER

Findmypast has put online 1.2 million pages from 7000 volumes – which document, in total, the lives of 41 million people. The Register comprises names, addresses, marital status and occupation, in a similar way to the 1911 census. However, it records additional details to the census, such as dates of birth and whether individuals were members of the armed services, or the reserves. It also shows any changes of name. The website reflects the era in which the Register was taken with its use of 1930s style fonts and historical images, creating an attractive and user-friendly interface.

What is different about the website is its incorporation of contextual information, which creates a more interactive element. Findmypast has integrated a historical map element to its 1939 register website. Once an address or name search has been carried out, you can see a map showing the exact address in 1888, 1937, and the present. This is fascinating if your family

member's house was built during this time; you can see the development of where they lived, perhaps from fields in 1888 to a newly built house in 1937, to being part of a more urban, large-scale development today. There are also period photographs, put online for the first time, and region-specific newspaper articles, each tailored to an individual record. Therefore, the register website will enable you to follow wider developments in terms of population, geography and society, and put your family within that wider context.

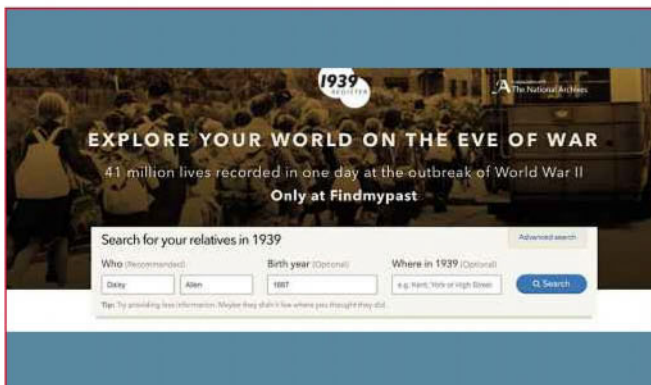
Given that some people listed in the register are likely to be alive today, what are the implications? Firstly, the register does not include anyone who was still alive in 1991 or afterwards – their entry will be redacted. If someone is represented by this 'black line' in a household result, but you know they have since died, you can use the 'Update the record' button at the bottom of the screen. You can also use this if you or another family member is listed on the register when they should





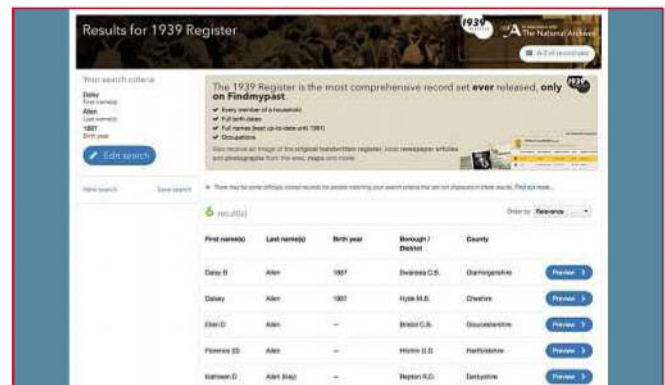
# Step-by-step: Find a family member in 'The Wartime Domesday Book'

Searching for your family member on the 1939 Register site couldn't be easier, as we show



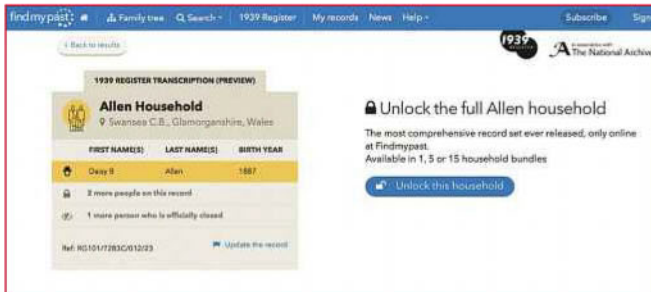
## BASIC SEARCH

**1** The 1939 Register offers a variety of search options. You can search by first name, last name, year of birth and place (as is usual with Findmypast, there is also an advanced search box).



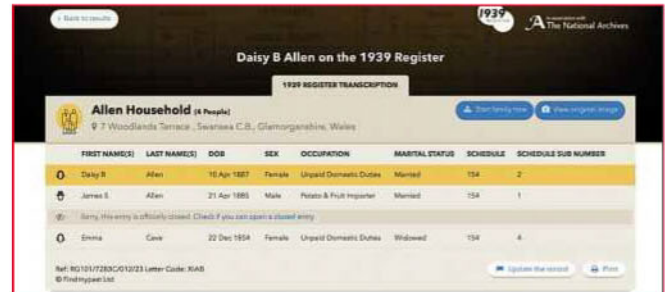
## RESULTS

**2** Here, we have searched for individuals named Daisy Allen, born around 1887. The search results come up with various people, with their birth year and district listed. You can click on the buttons on the right hand side to find out more.



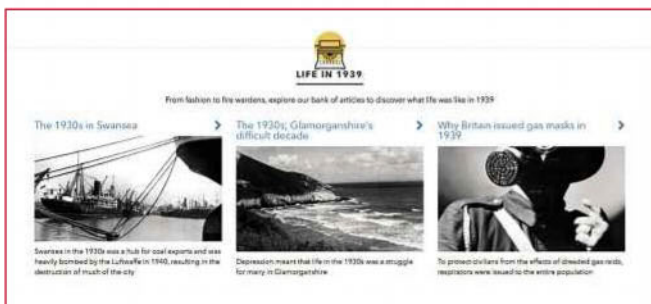
## UNLOCK THE PAGE

**3** Clicking on the individual result brings up a locked page – you can click on the button to 'unlock' the household, but will now be asked to pay.



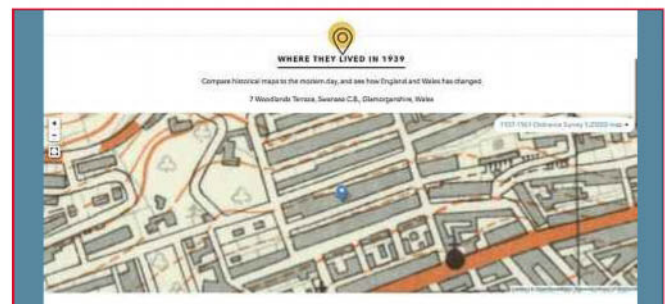
## LOOK AT THE REGISTER

**4** Once unlocked, the result shows not only fuller details about an individual, but also lets you click for a scan of the original register image.



## FIND OUT MORE

**5** Each 'unlocked' transcript will also give you three photographs and three contemporary newspaper articles linked to the area where your family member was living in 1939. They are matched to your family member's gender, location and age.



## MAP YOUR HOUSE

**6** You can see not only who lived at a specific address in 1939, but also map the property's location over time. The website links to three types of newspaper – the Ordnance Survey 1888-1913 map; Ordnance Survey 1937-1961; and the present day.



## News from 1939:

### The nationwide butter ramp

24 hours before the government put into operation plans to requisition butter stocks, the plans leaked – and in Liverpool, Glasgow and Manchester, a 'profit ramp' was being operated. On 29 September, the press reported that "the betrayal of government plans has cost the country at least £50,000".

The Corah hosiery factory in Leicester in 1939 – the 1939 Register gives researchers details of householders' occupations



Enumerators had called at some houses eight times, but some had ignored their knocking

The blank National Register form given to householders to fill in



not be. Updating a record is made as easy as possible, but it does require you to scan a death certificate or evidence of identity as part of the process. Batches of new, opened, records will be released on a weekly basis, and will reflect the evidence of death records submitted by users.

One thing should be borne in mind. The register was a record of the civilian population of England and Wales as at 29 September 1939 – therefore, many members of the armed forces will not be listed, as they had already been called up for military service. However, it is possible to search for individuals who were members of the naval, army or air force reserves, or the Civil Defence Services. Likewise, the register was a record of where individuals were on the night of 29 September, so, as with most census records, if an individual wasn't at his usual home that night, but at a friend's, in hospital, or at a hotel, he will not appear at that address if you search there, and you'll need to search the name in other locations.

## SCOTTISH AND IRISH REGISTERS

This release only relates to the England and Wales register, but this does not mean that other parts of the UK did not conduct a similar register of its populations. In Scotland, there was also a National Identity Register in 1939,

but access to its records is still through National Records of Scotland ([www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)). You have to formally request an extract of an entry from the register in writing using the NRS Form NR1 (a downloadable copy is available at [www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/registration/form-nr1.pdf](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/registration/form-nr1.pdf)), and enclose a fee of £15 (there is a charge of £5 if the person you are requesting information about cannot be traced). The Scottish register had been kept secret under the prohibition set by the 1939 National Registration Act, but in December 2009, the Scottish Registrar General, advised by the Scottish Government's Freedom of Information Union, reviewed the restriction and decided to make available the details of people in the register who had since died. If you are enquiring about a person whose death was registered outside of Scotland, you have to provide a copy of the death certificate with your application.

Northern Ireland also conducted a national register in 1939. It has long been seen as a valuable resource to family historians due to the destruction of the 1926 Northern Ireland census – a fact that was only confirmed by the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and the National Statistics Office in 2013.

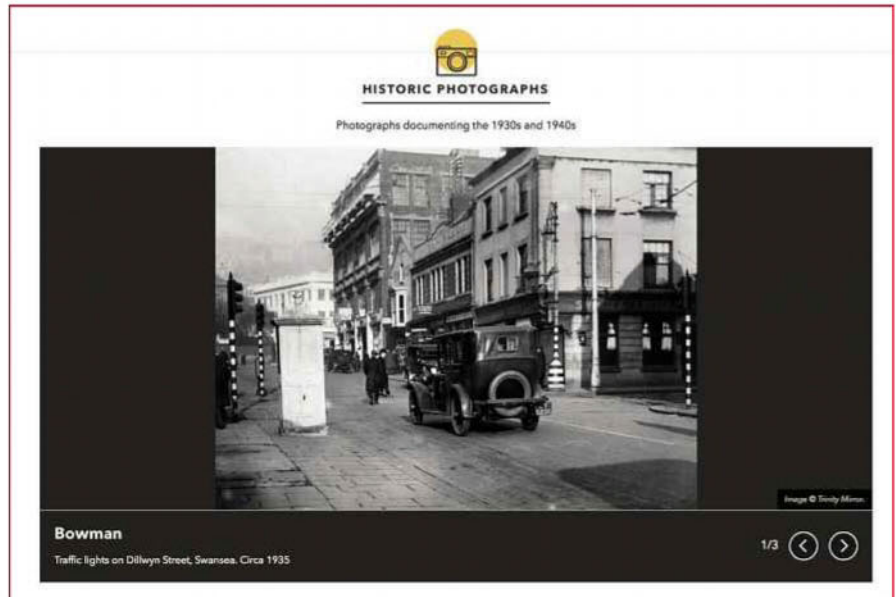
Although again made 'secret' under the 1939 legislation, two challenges were made later, and now details can be sought under the 2000 Freedom of Information Act. Individuals have to apply in writing to PRONI, by email, letter or fax, or complete a PRONI online enquiry form ([http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/about\\_proni/freedom\\_of\\_information/proni\\_enquiry\\_form.htm](http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/about_proni/freedom_of_information/proni_enquiry_form.htm)). Unlike in Scotland, there is no charge for this information in Northern Ireland.



# Build a picture of 1939 life

The 1939 Register website includes some innovative interactive features – we look at the main ones you'll be using

Findmypast wants the 1939 Register not just to give you the basic details of your family – it wants to help you build a picture of their lives and where they lived in 1939. With that in mind, it is using three main type of document to help you learn more. Firstly, mapping. When you look at an address, the 1939 Register website will show you how it looked in the past, on three different maps that cover the 19th century to the present day. If you're looking at a building that was fairly new in the 1939, you may see it as a field in the past; or you might be able to see it become a progressively more built-up area as time moves on. We found this a bit like using the Charles Booth poverty maps of Victorian London – it's fascinating being able to see an area change before your eyes! Secondly, the site shows you period photographs that help you see where your family members were living at the start of World War 2. These are based on location, and many have never been displayed online before, so you may well find



An unlocked household will include photographs of their local area

something new and unexpected when you search the site. Thirdly, the site harnesses the information of historic newspapers – not a surprising development, seeing as Findmypast and the British Newspaper Archive are owned by the same company. Each unlocked

result on the 1939 Register site links to historic newspapers that have been chosen to match the region you're searching for. This way, you can see what the local news was at the time of the register, and maybe even find reference to your family member.



In late 1939, rationing of food began to be considered, and had already started for petrol. Bacon, butter and sugar were rationed from 8 January, with other foodstuffs (including meat) following soon after

## CONTACTS

### The 1939 Register

<http://www.findmypast.co.uk/1939register>

### Irish Genealogy Toolkit

Useful walkthrough and history of the register in Northern Ireland

[w. http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/1939-national-register.html](http://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/1939-national-register.html)

### National Records of Scotland

New Register House  
Edinburgh EH1 3YT

[w. www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)

[e. records@nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:records@nrscotland.gov.uk)

[t. 0131 314 4411](tel:01313144411) (extract ordering service)





# Wishing you a happy, historical, Christmas

*Christmas past and Christmas present – this month, we present our wishes for a genealogically happy Christmas, and detail some unusual Christmases from history*

**W**e asked our editorial team and some of our regular writers to tell us what they would like for Christmas – here are their genealogy and history-related Christmas wishes...

## *Descended from Neanderthals?*

Only a couple of years ago, geneticists first found tiny percentages of Neanderthal DNA in Europeans, but so far nobody has been tested whose direct female-line mitochondrial DNA, or direct male line Y chromosome is Neanderthal, not Homo sapiens. It is possible, though: an archaic human Y chromosome from the African equivalents of Neanderthals has been found in an American with male-line west African ancestry, but it hasn't happened in Europe yet. So my Christmas wish is that the next European who is tested will prove to have male-line descent from Neanderthals – preferably in a lineage from which I'm descended too!

**Anthony Adolph**

## *Breaking a Glasgow brick wall*

For 15 years I have been researching various ancestral lines in Scotland, but one ancestor in particular remains stubbornly defiant in allowing me to pass – my 2x great-grandfather, John Brownlee MacFarlane. The only clue to his parentage lies in his Inverness marriage record, which notes him to be the son of a John MacFarlane, blacksmith, and Ann Brownlee, with the census noting him to be originally from Glasgow, and born circa 1837. So my plea to Santa is simple. Please tell John that I

wholeheartedly surrender, and then help me work out when and where he was born!

**Chris Paton**

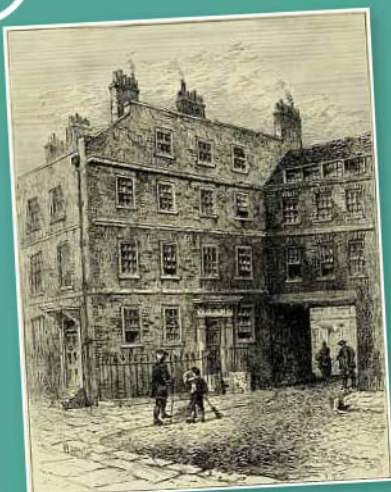
## *I wish I could turn back the clock and meet Great Aunt Lena*

Many years ago when beginning my family tree, I was advised to go and see 'Great Aunt Lena', a person I'd never heard of. It was coming up to Christmas, so I put off the visit. Weeks turned into months, until one day I was told she had died aged 94. Many years later I discovered that Lena was actually the sister of my grandfather, who was killed in WW1. I truly wish I could turn back the clock to that Christmas many years ago, to make my apologies to Lena and to record all the lost family history she would have been able to impart.

**Colin Waters**



A blacksmith in the mid-19th century, as was John MacFarlane



How Gough Square, home to Samuel Johnson and the Harper family, looked in the mid-18th century

## *Magic up some new parish records online*

My Christmas wish would be to be able to break down the brick wall I face with my maternal ancestors. My family, the Harpers, lived in the city of London – in the mid-18th century, they were neighbours of Dr Johnson in Gough Square. However, although I know my ancestor Ambrose Harper had a father called John and brothers called James, John and Matthew – named in his will and his apprenticeship records – I can't locate any of them in terms of parish records. I suspect the father, John, migrated to London from elsewhere in the country, but I can't prove this. You'd think Ambrose Harper was a fairly unusual name, but there are a load of them in Norfolk who I know aren't 'my' family – and otherwise, I can't get very far. Because they're absent from online records, and I have no idea where else to look in terms of geographical area, I'd love it if the Christmas elves could put some amazing new parish records online that would enable me to find members of the family.

**Nell Darby, editor**



## Undo the big rebranding exercises

In the absence of any serious likelihood of being given a time machine (not sure I'd want one anyway – far too dangerous and risky a concept\*), I'm instead going to be mildly controversial, and wish for an end to the seemingly pointless, and no doubt thoroughly expensive, rebranding of those organisations responsible for looking after our history. First it was the Public Record Office being turned into The National Archives – bland, confusing (with the already existing American version), and with an awkward abbreviation to boot. Now English Heritage has become Historic England and the English Heritage Trust. Couldn't the money spent on both these have been put to better use on conserving historical documents and buildings?

Alternatively, and a bit more mundane, it'd be really good to have a full-functioning, trouble-free internet instead of the endlessly problem-ridden affair that I seem to be stuck with.

\* though I wouldn't mind a hovercraft.

**Steve Dent, designer**



The newly expanded Public Record Office premises in Chancery Lane, 1896 – the move to Kew began in 1977 and it became The National Archives in 2003

## End the jealousy!



My Christmas wish is for the government to get its act together and sort out digitisation of English and Welsh civil registration records (we can only look on in jealousy at Scotland and Northern Ireland)! It's now 10 years since the government first teamed up with Siemens to improve access to birth, marriage and death records from 1837 onwards (although the plan was never quite to offer full, direct public access anyway), and seven years since those DoVE/EAGLE/MAGPIE plans crashed to the ground. Its

successor, the Digitisation & Indexing Project, itself ground to a halt in 2010, although apparently around half of the records had actually been digitised. How tantalising... We haven't heard from the Identity and Passport Service (which operates the GRO) on the subject since it said in 2012 that there were no current plans to resume the work. Which leaves Father Christmas and his elves to complete the job!

**Andrew Chapman, executive editor**

## To Cambodia on Santa's Sleigh

Being a huge fan of historical buildings, my Christmas wish would involve me traveling back in time to see some of the world's most fascinating buildings being built, lived and worked in. I would start with Cambodia's Angkor Wat – to me a place of captivating beauty. Built in the first half of the 12th century, it still stands today. Being a witness to its construction and seeing how people used the temples and lived around them would be wonderful. And then there are all the amazing castles and grand houses of Europe... another lifetime of complete exploration awaits. I think I might need Santa's sleigh to help me do it all in one night!

**Georgia Styring, designer**

## Finding Aladdin

Pantomimes are a great Christmas tradition in which my ancestor, Jack Knowles, appeared for many seasons. He was part of the comedy duo Barrett and Knowles who were described as patter or cross-talk comedians. How I wish I'd been at Glasgow's Theatre Royal at Christmas 1905 to see them in Aladdin with Harry Lauder who sang "I love a lassie" for the first time to rapturous applause and many encores. The show received excellent reviews and the title of Barrett and Knowles' opening song "Are we downhearted? No!" became their catchphrase. I wish too that I could find a recording of this and locate some photos of these 'merchants of mirth'.

**Doreen Hopwood**



Angkor Wat in 1860



# WHEN DID PEOPLE START DRESSING AS SANTA?

The first mention of Santa Claus in the English regional press was in the mid 19th century. The Nottingham Review in 1848 mentioned an engraving of Santa Claus in a literary journal, but in 1853, the Leicester Mercury was still describing him as a character imported by Dutch and German settlers to the United States – “There the old Santa Claus – who is no other than the Pelz Nickel of Germany and the Russian Saint Nicholas, the patron of children – brings presents for the children at midnight. Smothered in good things, the old saint, who is personated by one of the family, sits smoking by the side of the fire till the clock strikes twelve, when out rush the little ones from their beds or sleeping corners, and with noise of trumpets and drums assail the saint, and claim his presents.” (Leicester Mercury, 31 Dec 1853). In 1850, the Athlone Sentinel had written about ‘Kris Kringle’, who filled children’s stockings with toys at Christmas – and it was Kris Kringle who was the ‘huge figure’ said to come down the chimney – although Santa Claus was mentioned, he appeared to be a different entity.



Thomas Nast's 1863 illustration of Santa Claus for Harper's Weekly is believed to have influenced modern depictions of the character

## The Vindication of CHRISTMAS

His Twelve Years Observations upon the Times, concerning the lamentable Game called Sweepstake; acted by General Plunder and Major General Tax; With his Exhortation to the people; a description of that oppressing Ringworm called Excise; and the manner how our high and mighty Christmas-Ale that formerly would knock down tyrants, & trip up the heels of a Giant, brook into a deep Consumption with ailment from Hyslop's.

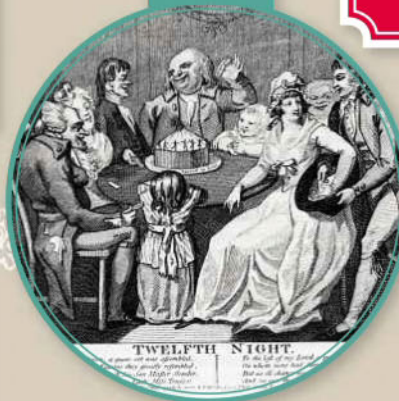


**1652**

Oliver Cromwell clamped down hard on celebrations of Christmas, but this 1652 pamphlet shows Devon farmers keeping up traditions

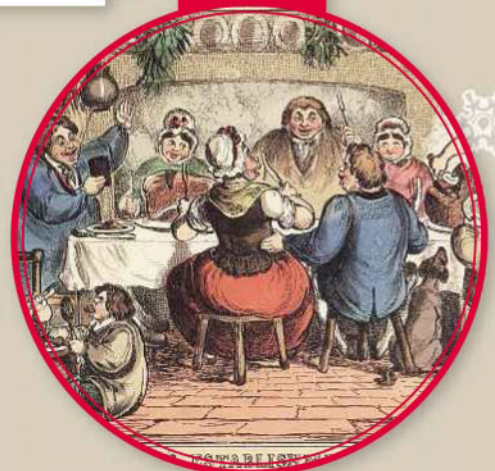
**1770s**

A chimney sweep looks for a kiss under the mistletoe in the 1770s



**1794**

Twelfth Night ribaldry depicted by Isaac Cruikshank in 1794



**1800**

A farmhouse Christmas meal in 1800



## TOP THREE: CHRISTMAS WISHES

As the year draws to a close, we offer up some of the genealogy-related presents we'd like to get for Christmas...

### 1921 CENSUS

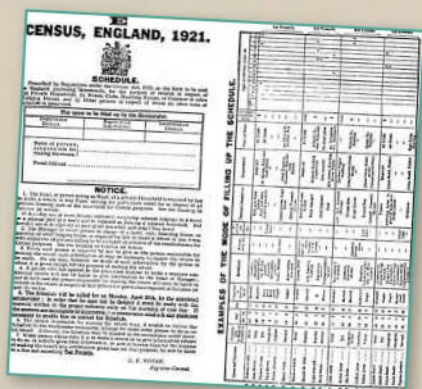
**1** Yes, we know it's not due to be released until 2021, but given that the 1911 census was released early, wouldn't it be good to get this one, too? This would, now that the 1939 register has been released, enable us to fill in the gaps of our family's lives every decade until the 1940s.

### AUTOMATIC NOTIFICATIONS

**2** Half the fun of genealogy is the searching, and sense of achievement when we track down an errant ancestor. But it might be good to have some way of being tipped off when new records are released that feature our family members – an email that says "Uncle Fred's marriage is now online!" and lets us go and find it easily.

### FREE CERTIFICATES

**3** Just as the main genealogy sites sometimes offer free searches for a weekend, how good would it be for the GRO to offer free certificates for a weekend? Think of all those £10 notes we could save, and all the information we could get for free.



## CRIMINALS CALLED CHRISTMAS

Christmas was a fairly common name for those in the past. Some were named for the time of year. A baby girl born on Christmas Day 1896 in Norfolk was named Christmas Violet, for example, and in a couple of cases, the time of year perfectly combined with a surname – a boy born on Christmas Day 1899 was named William Christmas Angel, and another boy born exactly a year later was called Christmas Berry. The wonderfully named Christmas Carroll was born in Kingston upon Thames on Christmas Day, 1891. Others, such as Christmas Thomas, born in Liverpool in the summer of 1826, and another boy whose first two names were Christmas Shepherd, born in February, did not have such a link. Some parents simply had a sense of humour – such as Mr and Mrs Tree in Kent, who in 1903 christened their daughter Lilian Ruth Christmas Tree.

There are many Christmas criminals in the archives, including Christmas Jones, who was sent to the Marshalsea Prison for debt on 9 January 1815, and discharged a month later. Christmas Allen was acquitted of larceny at the Norwich Quarter Sessions in July 1819; his 17-year-old son, also named Christmas, then appeared at the January County Sessions, also charged with larceny, but was less lucky than his parent, being found guilty and sent to prison for four months. Christmas appears to have been a particularly popular name amongst criminals in Norfolk, with the Quarter Sessions records also recording a Christmas Asker, Christmas Betts, Christmas Bloomfield, Christmas Brett, Christmas Brummage and others.



**1825**

'High life below stairs', depicted by Robert Cruikshank, c1825

**1870**

An illustration from 'The Children's International Christmas Album' by the Countess D'Elff



**1872**

Suggested puddings for Christmas from an 1872 edition of Mrs Beeton's 'Every-day Cookery and Housekeeping Book'

**1876**

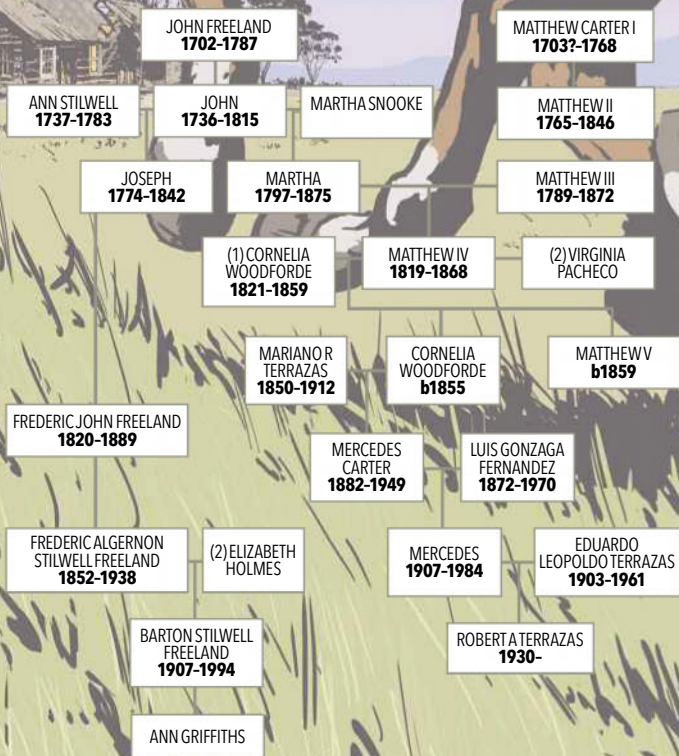
Dressing the Christmas tree in 1876 – Prince Albert had made the custom popular in the 1840s







## THE FREELAND-CARTER FAMILY TREE



# Dangerous lives in South America

Ann Griffiths uncovered the lives of five generations of Matthew Carters – and they had a habit of following wars around...

By Ann Griffiths



Ann Griffiths has many years of experience of researching and publishing on family and local history. She is also a volunteer at The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre, Havant, helping people with their genealogy and local history queries.

**T**he first Matthew Carter was born about 1703, and Britain was at war for much of his life. He was a maltster in Stubbington, near Fareham in Hampshire. His crops and product would have gone to feed and cheer our soldiers and sailors, via numerous brewhouses and bakeries in southern Hampshire. The latter produced what they were pleased to call bread, which was actually almost indestructible ships' biscuits.

Matthew II was born on 15 September 1764, to his father's second wife, Ann Faithfull. When Matthew I died in 1768, Matthew II was only three. He was later one of the leading inhabitants of Forton, a village north-west of Gosport. He owned and worked Forton Mill, the land of which extended down both sides of Forton Creek, an inlet of Portsmouth Harbour. Forton's farmers and millers provided much of Gosport's fresh produce, and supplied large Admiralty victualling warehouses and storage yards.

With the expansion of Priddy's Hard, the naval armament depot at the mouth of Forton Creek (now the excellent Explosion! Museum – see [www.explosion.org.uk](http://www.explosion.org.uk)), Matthew II began to sell land to the Board of Ordnance, including a piece on the south side of the creek. Here,

in 1796, the Board started building what became Forton Royal Marines Barracks.

However with the end of our wars with France, the roof fell in for Matthew II. The victualling yard, awash with bags of biscuit, no longer needed Matthew's corn or his flour. Running out of cash, on 26 May 1820 Matthew II raised £1000 on a mortgage from halfbrothers Joseph and Henry Freeland of Chichester. Collateral included Carter's one-third share in the 55 foot sloop Hope. Nevertheless on 27 April 1822, Matthew was made bankrupt, although Forton Mill somehow remained in his hands. Matthew II died in 1846.

Matthew Carter III was born on 17 January 1789. In 1817, in Alverstoke, he married Martha (1797-1875), Joseph Freeland's much younger half-sister. In 1819, when his son Matthew IV was born, he was described as a merchant. Soon after that he obtained a post in the Victualling Office at Weevil Yard; he served there for four years.

In October 1823, George Canning appointed Christopher Richard Nugent as first Consul General to Chile. He arrived in Valparaíso in May 1824, accompanied by two vice consuls. The first was Henry William Rouse (1798-1871), rumoured to be the illegitimate son of George IV and 'an oriental lady', and

## The Carters' Mexico

Mexico declared its independence from Spain in 1821 via the Treaty of Córdoba, and a Republic was established under a federal constitution in 1824, with Antonio de Santa Anna as President. It was on his watch that Mexico lost the Mexican-American War (1846-8) but he survived politically until 1854 when the constitution was reformed under the more liberal Benito Juárez, who ran the country on and off until he died in 1872. A period of civil war erupted in 1857. France invaded Mexico in 1861, installing the Hapsburg Maximilian I as Emperor from 1864 until he was overthrown and killed in 1867. Chihuahua was the centre for Juárez' government in exile during this period. His opponent Porfirio Díaz took over in 1876 and ruled until he was overthrown in 1910 via the Mexican Revolution (1910-1921). This brought to prominence warlords such as the murderous thug Pancho Villa, who made Chihuahua his base; his chief opponent Alvaro Obregón; and Emiliano Zapata, who was supplied with arms smuggled over the American border via the state of Chihuahua by his ally Pascual Orozco. Military government that stabilised the country in 1921 eventually gave way to one-party and essentially Socialist rule in 1929 and that lasted to the millennium.

the second was Matthew Carter III. How these three gentlemen and their families were squeezed into an 80-gun warship remains a mystery, particularly as there were several other travellers on board.

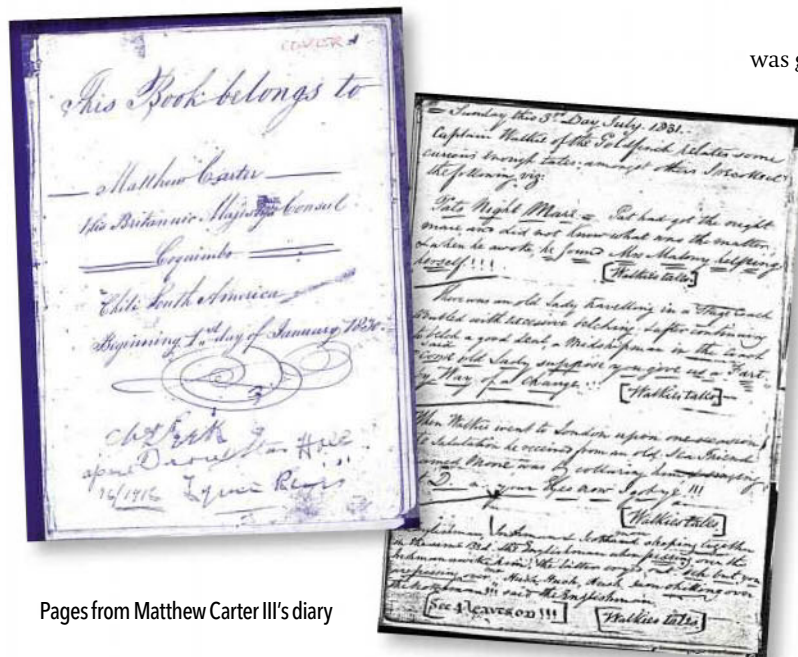
Carter was transferred north to Coquimbo. He and his family were crammed into HMS Fly and arrived on 27 May 1824. On 5 January 1825, he was promoted to full Consul at a salary of £1000 per year, plus £300 expenses. This must have seemed a good

salary in England, but it went nowhere in Chile. In addition, living in Coquimbo was some 50% dearer than in Valparaíso. Carter received a pay rise to £1250 on 5 May 1827.

Coquimbo was the main port for Chilean copper exports, and also exports of gold and silver which were shipped out in British warships. Contact with England was sporadic – on 30 May 1829 Matthew noted that there had been no English mail since the previous October. A letter of his dated ▶



## Case Study One: Dangerous lives in South America



Pages from Matthew Carter III's diary

► 15 January 1831, when he was in Valparaíso, states that he could not acknowledge a communication from the Foreign Secretary of 15 April 1830 until six months later. This had been a nitpicking letter asking for unobtainable statistics regarding Chilean exports of precious metals.

In 2007, Bonhams sold Matthew III's 1830 diary to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University (<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu>). In the diary, Carter noted his dislike of the 'dullness and sameness' of Chilean life, the cost of living – and events related to the 1830 uprising. This was serious stuff. At the end of 1829 civil war had broken out. Matthew wrote to his boss in Valparaíso that 'fighting has broken out on our very streets and musket balls have actually whistled past the door'. Private houses had been ransacked and plundered and their inhabitants tied up and threatened.

Matthew, backed by the British inhabitants,



Musket balls have actually whistled past the door

pleaded for a warship to be sent for their asylum. Instead, he was told off for complaining and ordered to stay put. In April 1830, plagued by dysentery, he pleaded for home leave on grounds of ill health. Anticipating this, in July he started selling up, disposing of the piano that had followed him from house to house. In October, he was allowed to retreat to Valparaíso and in November, backed by his surgeon who reported Matthew emaciated and debilitated state, and by a further doctor's letter in January 1831, Matthew

was granted home leave. In

January 1832, he was in Dover, and by July, was in Margate. In June 1833, Carter was appointed as Consul General to the more congenial Cartagena in Spain, but at a much reduced salary of £400. He seems to have remained there, although his last two children were born in France in 1839 and 1842. He retired in 1844, to Brighton, and died in London in 1872.

His son, Matthew Carter IV, grew up mostly in Chile and Spain, but studied

medicine in Britain, qualifying in 1845. He was a physician practising in Somerset when he married Cornelia Woodforde there in 1847. Memories of gold and silver, however, stirred within him. He set off with Cornelia to Australia in 1849, with several children being born during their travels in New Zealand and California. It is probable that Matthew IV prospected in the hills near Coloma, north-east of Sacramento.

In 1858, the family moved to Chihuahua in Mexico. Whether they travelled entirely overland by

stagecoach, avoiding hostile Apaches, or partly by ship, is not recorded, but it must have been a rough ordeal for Cornelia. Chihuahua is in desert country at the eastern slope of the Sierra Madre – it is rugged terrain, and Chihuahua was very isolated for centuries; there were few roads there until the 1950s. Matthew Carter V was born there on 23 November 1859, but his mother, Cornelia, died just 17 days after his birth.

Matthew IV parked the children with a local couple and set off prospecting. In 1861 he married Virginia Pacheco, with the marriage being described in the family as a 'punishment from God'. Matthew IV died in Mexico in 1868. At some point in the early 1860s, Matthew V disappeared. He was said to have been kidnapped by Apaches; this would seem to have been nothing unusual.

Two traceable lines survived from Matthew IV. Emily (born 1854) married Heinrich Moritz and a descendant was later reported to be in Houston. Cornelia (born 1855) married Mariano Terrazas (1850–1912) in 1871. The Terrazas family's descendants eventually settled around El Paso, Texas. One of them, Bob Terrazas, has been the main source for the Mexican end of this story. ■

## Was Matthew taken by Apaches?

The aboriginal Pueblo Indians of the Chihuahua area, the Tarahumaras, or Rarámuri, were a primitive and gentle people, cultivators as well as herdsman and hunters. They were enslaved to work in the mines by the Spanish and were cruelly treated by them, retreating in the 17th century and reverting to their old ways of living in the wild in caves in the far reaches of the Sierra Madre, remote from civilization, as some still do. Others lived near cities in poverty, occasionally venturing into the city to beg. Massive deforestation had already encroached on their land by the time Matthew Carter IV arrived in Chihuahua. People later observed a blond, blue eyed man among the Tarahumara. Whether he was Matthew V, or another, cannot be known.

Or could Matthew have been taken by Apaches who remained very active in Mexico until the 1880s? In either case, most Native Americans, and particularly Apaches, valued children. They were kidnapped to increase the tribe, probably to make up for what must have been a very high infant mortality. Captured youngsters were given to families to act as servants and helpers. Usually if they survived and adapted to the rigors of their existence, they were assimilated into the family and tribe, living out their days in the ways of their captors.





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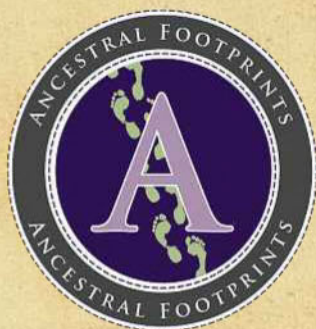
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# Research routes: Liverpool



Liverpool's fortunes have been shaped by its port and associated industries – and, as **Nicola Lisle** explores, your ancestors could have been involved



Originally known as *Liuerpul*, meaning 'muddy creek' or 'pool', Liverpool was once little more than a small agricultural settlement within the historic county of Lancashire, clustered on the banks of the River Mersey. Despite being granted a Royal charter by King John in 1207, it remained a small market town for centuries, relying on fishing and farming for survival, and suffering economic decline during the Middle Ages. By 1571, the situation was so desperate that the locals appealed to Elizabeth I to help the "poor decayed town of Liverpool". It wasn't until the 17th century that the town began to prosper. The silting up of the River Dee meant that the nearby city of Chester gradually

diminished in importance, paving the way for Liverpool to develop its potential as a port. Soon, Liverpool had established trading links first with Ireland and later with America and the West Indies, laying the foundations for its status as one of the UK's major ports.

## MARITIME TOWN

Liverpool's rapid growth began after the Restoration in 1660. By the beginning of the 18th century, Liverpool was enjoying a burgeoning overseas trade in sugar, tobacco, grain and timber. This in turn spawned the development of an equally successful shipbuilding industry. Before long the town's natural harbour was struggling to cope, and it was clear that a larger, purpose-built dock was needed. Following an Act of

Parliament in 1709, the first of Liverpool's famous docks was built by London engineer Thomas Steers. Later known as Old Dock, it opened in 1715 and was the world's first commercial enclosed wet dock. Within 20 years, Old Dock had become too small as Liverpool's growth spurt continued, and in 1736 Steers oversaw the construction of Salthouse Dock, along with a Customs House, dry dock and pier. Throughout the 18th century an intricate network

of enclosed docks developed along the waterfront, including George's Dock (1771), Manchester Dock (1780), King's Dock (1788) and Queen's Dock (1796). At the same time, vast numbers of spacious warehouses were built alongside the docks, making Liverpool one of the largest and most efficient ports in the world.

## 'BLACK GOLD'

The most shameful episode in Liverpool's history is its involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, which became its main preoccupation during the 18th century and transformed it into one of the UK's principal cities, second only to London in size and importance. The trade generated unprecedented wealth for the city, and many of its grandest and most



By the 18th century, Liverpool enjoyed a burgeoning overseas trade in sugar, tobacco, grain and timber



Liverpool's iconic skyline, with the Liver Building in the centre, shows how it has developed since the 17th and 18th centuries (as seen in the images above – left: 1680, the earliest known painting of the city; and right, 1754, by which time it was already one of the world's leading slave trade ports)



elegant buildings arose from the proceeds of 'black gold'. Liverpool's first recorded slave voyage came as early as 1699, when the Liverpool Merchant exchanged British-made goods for around 200 African slaves, who were then shipped to Barbados. For the next hundred years, Liverpool ships

transported African slaves across the Atlantic in filthy and overcrowded conditions, returning home with cotton, sugar and tobacco grown on slave plantations.

By the time slavery was abolished in Britain in 1807, Liverpool had become one of the world's leading slave



Liverpool in 1836, at the height of the city's role in transatlantic emigration

## Liverpool timeline

### Key historical dates in the city's history

- ✦ **1207** King John creates a new Royal Borough on the banks of the Mersey, with its own market, church and castle.
- ✦ **1644** Liverpool is under siege for 16 days when Prince Rupert of the Rhine makes a failed attempt to capture the castle.
- ✦ **1670** The town's first sugar refinery is built.
- ✦ **1699** Liverpool is granted independent parish status by an Act of Parliament.
- ✦ **1715** Liverpool's Old Dock opens, becoming the world's first commercial wet dock.
- ✦ **1754** The magnificent Georgian Town Hall is designed by Bath architect John Wood.
- ✦ **1830** The world's first intercity rail link, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, starts.
- ✦ **1846** Albert Dock, the port's first fully-enclosed dock, is built.
- ✦ **1880** Liverpool is granted city status in recognition of its importance as a leading UK port.
- ✦ **1906** A monument is erected to Queen Victoria on the site of the medieval castle.



# Top three: Places to visit

These three waterfront museums will give you an insight into the lives of Liverpudlians

Nicola Lisle



## MUSEUM OF LIVERPOOL

**1** This award-winning museum opened in 2011 and tells the story of the city's maritime, cultural and sporting heritage through permanent galleries and changing exhibitions. Find out how the social and industrial changes of the last 200 years shaped the lives of ordinary Liverpudlians, and explore the legacies of the city's many pioneers.

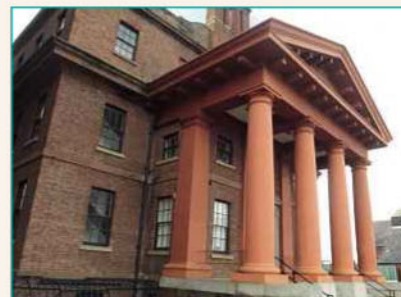
[www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol)



## MERSEYSIDE MARITIME MUSEUM

**2** Liverpool is rightly proud of its seafaring history, which is celebrated in this fascinating collection of boats, ship models, nautical artefacts and maritime paintings. Here you can find out about life in the merchant navy and its role in both world wars, and explore Liverpool's connection to the ill-fated *Titanic*.

[www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime)



## INTERNATIONAL SLAVERY MUSEUM

**3** The darker side of Liverpool's past is remembered in this museum, which opened in 2007 to mark the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. It explores the history of this notorious trade, Liverpool's involvement and its legacy. Currently part of Merseyside Maritime Museum, it will eventually open a visitor centre in the former Albert Dock Traffic Office (pictured).

[www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism)



Liverpool became the largest cotton trader in the world, handling more than half a million tons annually

► trade ports, accounting for around 80 per cent of Britain's slave trading. At its peak, it is estimated that Liverpool had over 130 ships involved in the trade, and was carrying around 45,000 slaves a year

from Africa to North America and the Caribbean. Even after the abolition of slavery, the practice continued well into the 1830s. By then, Britain was in the grip of the largest-scale mass emigration in history, as people sought new opportunities in America, Canada and Australia. Liverpool quickly became one of the UK's leading passenger ports, and it is estimated that around nine million people set sail from Liverpool on emigrant ships during the 19th century.

## INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Liverpool's other source of prosperity during the 19th century was cotton. The port was ideally placed to import raw cotton from America, India and Egypt, distribute it to Lancashire's cotton mills and then export the finished products. The opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1810 enabled the raw materials and goods to be moved with greater speed and efficiency, adding considerably to Liverpool's



The Albert Dock was the Victorian city's first fully enclosed dock

already booming economy. By the end of the century, Liverpool had become the largest cotton trader in the world, handling more than half a million tons annually. More docks were built to cope with the increased trade, most notably the famous Albert Dock, Liverpool's first fully enclosed dock. Designed by Jesse Hartley, Liverpool's Dock Engineer, it featured rows of well-ventilated, fire-proof warehouses and was modelled on St Katherine's Dock in

London. More than just a commercial success, Albert Dock was also architecturally splendid with its Doric columns lining the quayside. Its first warehouses were officially opened by Prince Albert in 1846, and the dock became the hub of Liverpool's import and export activities, handling not only cotton but also rum, sugar, tea, rice, silk, ivory and spices from America, the West Indies and the Far East.

By the end of the 19th

Nicola Lisle



Jesse Hartley designed Liverpool's famous Albert Dock

Nicola Lisle



# Liverpool surnames

Discover the origins of some Liverpool surnames with YFT expert Anthony Adolph

## JENKINSON



The surname Jenkinson is a patronymic meaning 'son

of Jenkin', a medieval diminutive of Jean or John (so it meant 'little John'). It appeared in medieval Yorkshire and then spread west and south. One line became baronets of Walcot, Oxfordshire and then Earls of Liverpool. From this family came Robert Jenkinson, 2nd Earl of Liverpool (1770-1828), Tory Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827, whose arms are shown here.

## FAZAKERLEY



The surname Fazakerley must be one of the most unusual

and distinctive of Liverpool surnames and is spelled in numerous different ways. Henry de Fasakerlegh appears in the Lancashire assize records in 1276. The 'de' in his name indicates that he was Henry of Fazakerley, a settlement just north of the port of Liverpool and now long-since swallowed up by Liverpool's urban sprawl. The place name means 'the border-field wood', from the Old English words *faes*, *aecer* and *lea*.

## HESKETH



The surname Hesketh is a locative one, denoting

someone from Hesketh. There are places so-called in Yorkshire, Cumberland (High and Low Hesketh) and Lancashire (Hesketh Bank), the latter being only 25 miles north-east of Liverpool. The place names are from the Old Norse *hest* and *skeith*, which probably mean 'race course (or boundary land) for horses'. Sir William Hesketh married the Fytton heiress of Rufford, about 20 miles north-east of Liverpool, in 1275.

**Carroll** A popular surname in Liverpool due to immigration from Ireland, where the surname was an Anglicisation variously of Mac[son of] Cearbhaill or O' [descendant of] Cearbhaill.

**Lennon** Liverpoolian Beatle John Lennon's surname is of Irish origin, from the Gaelic O' [descendant of] Leannáin, a Gaelic personal name from leann, 'cloak'.

**Bolger** A metonymic surname from the Old French *bouglie*, a term used in Medieval England for a maker of leather bags.

**White** Singer Cilla Black was born Priscilla White in Liverpool in 1943. Her surname most often comes from the Old English *hwit*, 'white', used for someone with pale hair or complexion.

**Lawless** Originally a Yorkshire surname, it was a nickname for one who was, literally, lawless.



century, Liverpool's global trading was beginning to decline, although trading with Europe continued beyond the turn of the century. Albert Dock's usefulness ended with the advent of steam ships, which were too wide for the dock entrance. Nevertheless, as the 20th century dawned, Liverpool was still one of the world's leading trading ports, with docklands, warehouses and factories covering an area

of seven miles. It wasn't until the outbreak of World War 1, which had a devastating effect on Liverpool's population and economy, that its dominance as a port came to an end. ■

Lime Street and St George's Hall in the 1890s



## By Nicola Lisle

Nicola Lisle is a freelance journalist, mainly writing about family history and classical music. She is the author of *Tracing Your Family History Made Easy* (Which? Books, 2011).

## CONTACTS

### Liverpool City Council Library and Archives

3rd Floor, Central Library, William Brown Street L3 8EW

**w.** <https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/>

**t.** 0151 233 3069

### University of Liverpool - Special Collections and Archives

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### Lancashire Record Office

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**w.** <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office.aspx>

**e.** [record.office@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:record.office@lancashire.gov.uk)

**t.** 01772 533039

### Maritime Archives and Library

Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 4AQ

**w.** <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime/archive/>

**t.** 0151 478 4424

## WEBSITES

### Liverpool and South West Lancashire Family History Society

**w.** <http://www.liverpool-genealogy.org.uk/>

### Tracing Slave Ancestors

**w.** <http://www.myslaveancestors.com/>

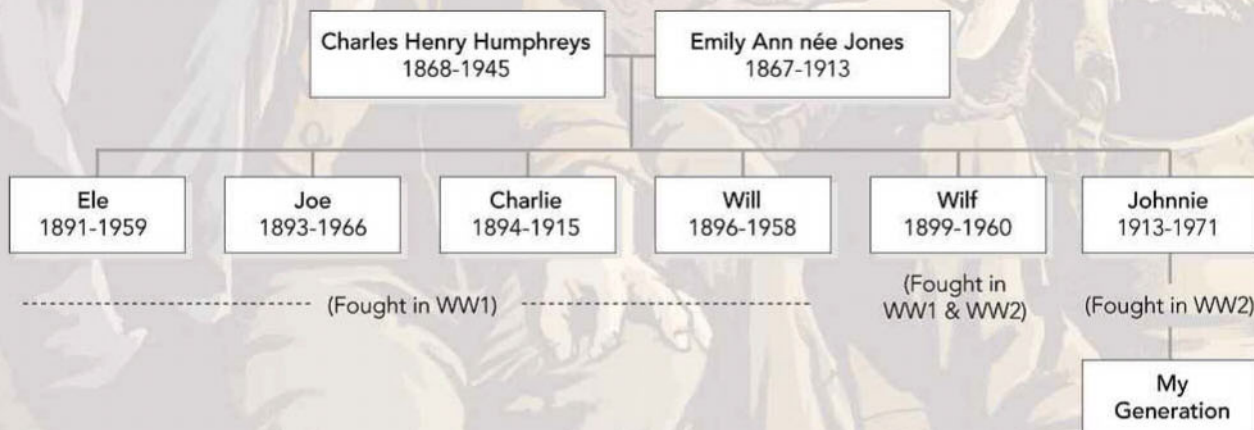
### Hibernia (for researching Irish ancestors in the Liverpool area)

**w.** <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hibernia/>





## HUMPHREYS SONS IN THE TWO WORLD WARS





# Lost in France

It was no surprise that Uncle Charlie enlisted in the Royal Welch Fusiliers – and, perhaps, nor was his tragic ending

By Raymond Humphreys



Raymond is retired and lives in South Wales. With his sister Mary, he has been researching his ancestry for nearly 40 years.

**M**y uncle, Charles Henry Humphreys, was the fourth child of a very large family. He was born in Ynysybwll, near Pontypridd, on 12 December, 1894, one of 17 brothers and a sole sister. My grandfather, also called Charles Henry Humphreys, spent all his working life in the coal mines in various parts of South Wales, although by 1906 he and his family were to settle in what would be the final family home in Pontygwaith, Rhondda Fach. My sister was the last Humphreys to be born there, in 1935.

Until the Education Act of 1918 came into force, the children would have left school at the age of 12. Most of the 11 brothers who survived into adulthood, including Charlie, followed their father's example and worked in the pits, at least for some of their early adult years. Many of the young men living in the Rhondda Fach at that time did the same thing. The 1911 census records 16-year-old Charlie as a 'coal miner's hewer's assistant'.

Then, on 8 February, 1913, my grandmother, Emily Ann (née Jones) died, ten days after the birth of her last child – my father, Ivor. It doesn't take much imagination to see the difficulties there would

have been at home, with a newborn baby and other young children clamouring for attention.

At all events, it could have been no surprise when, on the first day of October that same year, Charlie enlisted as Private Humphreys 5072 in the Royal Welch Fusiliers. The enlistment was at Pontypridd, just down the Taff Valley from the family home. Military training was undertaken further afield, in Wrexham, North Wales.

It is a matter of history that, less than a year after Charlie had 'taken the King's shilling', war was declared against Germany and Austria-Hungary. Charles went to France via Zeebrugge, Belgium, with other members of the British Expeditionary Force on 7 October 1914. He was posted to the 1st Battalion on 1 November and probably saw action in the Battles of Neuve Chappelle and Aubers Ridge in 1915.

But the most iconic moment came on Christmas Eve, 1914. This was when hostilities were briefly laid aside for an unauthorised truce between the British and German troops. They put down their rifles and played football. Although he was at the front,



The *Western Mail* feature on Charles and three of his brothers, together with the Ministry letter and his army chain

my uncle wouldn't have participated. His unit was not on the front line: they had exchanged duties with some Scots Greys, who wanted to be free for Hogmanay.

The Royal Welch Fusiliers was a regiment with a long tradition. The original 'Tommy Atkins' is thought to be the name of a real soldier who fought in the ranks at Lexington and elsewhere in the American War of Independence. Robert Graves, the poet, who was eight months my uncle's junior, enlisted with the regiment

“

Less than a year after Charlie took the King's shilling, war was declared

in the Great War and was a young officer in a number of its campaigns. Graves arrived in France on 17 May, 1915, but was initially attached to another regiment. Other literary connections were with Edmund Blunden, who joined a year later, Siegfried Sassoon, 'Hedd Wyn' (Ellis Evans), David Jones and Frank Richards. The May when Graves arrived in France was ▶

## WW1 history

### Understanding the wider context of war

I have always seen family history as going hand-in-hand with more general history. Only if we have some understanding of the wider historical and social context can we begin to get a feeling for our ancestors' lives. Nowhere is this truer than with the World Wars.

There is a wealth of material available, both in traditional written form and online. Do not neglect the former. Nearly all the information used for Charlie's story was put together in the 1980s, when computing was still in its infancy. My sister visited his grave in the same decade. I'd like to name just two written sources from the many available. The first is *The Viking Atlas of World War I* (available at <http://tinyurl.com/prn3m4y>). This contains maps and accounts for the important battles of the Western and Eastern Fronts. The second is the series of *Battleground Guides* published by Pen and Sword (see <http://tinyurl.com/ogv7nzz>). These are portable enough to carry with you on a field trip.

Naturally, there are many sources available online, but those I'd especially recommend are The Long, Long Trail ([www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net)), which is a huge site dealing with many aspects of WW1. Its section on battles is particularly worthwhile. The other site, [www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com), is very strong on history. There are a host of smaller specialist sites, and I even have one myself, July 1914 (<http://july1914.co.uk>).



# Family history in WW1

Numerous records help those researching WW1 family history

The family historian is well-served by online sources. All the major sites catering for us have useful sections on WW1 genealogy and there are many specialist sites. Before you begin looking online, though, find out what you can from relatives. Particularly useful to know will be your ancestor's service number, regiment or ship. Surviving photographs, medal index cards, diaries and letters can be useful here. Sadly, research can be easier if your ancestor died and you know where and when this was. Because of bomb damage in 1940, a researcher has only about a 40% chance of finding the record, even when making a personal visit to The National Archives in Kew, for a serviceman discharged after the war. Often the best place to start your online enquiries will be TNA ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)), and its Discovery search is very helpful (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission ([www.cwgc.org/](http://www.cwgc.org/)) is the best single source for fallen ancestors. Forces War Records (<https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/default.asp>) is useful, but not free; and, finally, The Great War 1914-1918 (<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/index.htm>) can give useful pointers to the location of war cemeteries.

► to be the month when my uncle's story drew to its close.

Much information can be gleaned from a 1979 letter from Ministry of Defence. This ends with a chilling note: "died of wounds 19 May 1915". Charlie is one of many thousands of soldiers of the Great War who are lying in France. His grave is in Chocques, near Béthune, close to the Belgian border. In the village then was a casualty clearing station. But there are questions not answered by any of the official records. Exactly how and where did he die? The letter from the ministry is incomplete. It carries the sentence "the location of his unit at the time of his wounding is not recorded". Why not?

With careful research, more of the story can be pieced together. Less than a week after the Battle of Aubers Ridge had ended fruitlessly with the loss of 11,000 men – proportionately to the number engaged in the battle the highest number of casualties in the Great War – the military leaders had resolved to do something else to support the French campaign. That 'something' is today known as the Battle of Festubert.

The commanders believed there had been no change

in the German military dispositions in the few days since the earlier battle. General Douglas Haig and his staff resolved to try not to repeat the mistakes made then, and planned a longer and better-targeted artillery bombardment, with a narrower infantry front making their attack. The following 'First Army Operation Order' was issued on 13 May 1915:

"Continue pressing forward towards Violaines and Beau Puits, establish a defensive flank along the La Bassée road on the left and maintaining the right at Givenchy. The line to be established in the first instance, if possible on the general line of the road Festubert – La Quinque Rue – La Tourelle crossroads – Port Arthur. The position to be consolidated and the troops reformed and communications established."

That same morning, the British bombardment duly opened. Over 101,000 shells were fired. All units of the

attacking battalions were reported to be in position by 10.00pm the next day. The lead units attacked, and by 3.15am on 14 August 1915, the 1st Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers joined the fray. They advanced towards the School House, and the sandbag-parapet German communication trench known as the 'Northern Breastwork'.

The Fusiliers were immediately hit by heavy machine-gun fire. Numbers were killed or wounded. By 6.30am, the survivors had struggled forward to join with the advance guard, meeting up with the Queens and Staffords in 'The Orchard'. Eventually they had to withdraw through lack of support on their left and heavy German shelling.

The fighting continued for a few more days, but only a limited tactical success was gained in the capturing of a few German positions. The strategic advance was negligible. The total number of British casualties suffered was 16,648. No wonder the 'location of his unit at the time of his wounding' was unknown for Charles Humphreys. There were simply too many soldiers who fell in Northern France



Charles' grave in Choques, France

in the battle. He could have been caught in heavy German shelling in The Orchard, or cut down by heavy machine-gun fire a few hours earlier at the Northern Breastwork.

Sir John French wrote to Douglas Haig on 14 May 1915:

"Be prepared to prosecute a deliberate and persistent attack. The enemy should never be given rest by either day or night, but be gradually and relentlessly worn down by exhaustion and loss until his defence collapses. As the element of surprise is now absent, it is probable that your progress will not be rapid."

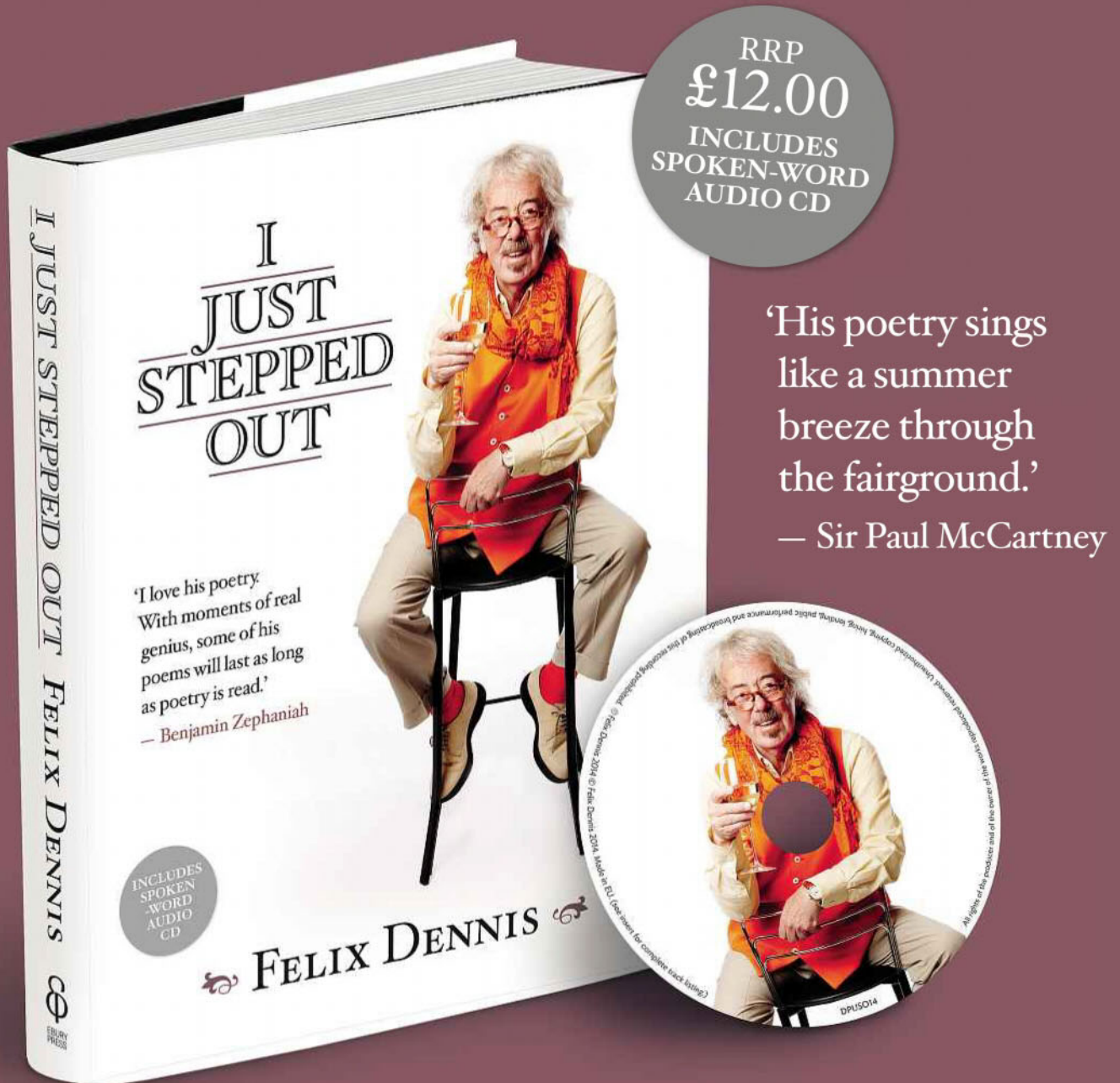
These words were later widely regarded as the start of the 'war of attrition' that the Great War became. What French omitted to say is that the other side would have been equally "prepared to prosecute a deliberate and persistent attack". Lions led by donkeys indeed.

There is a dark family footnote to this. A photographic feature appeared in the Western Mail later in 1915, showing Charles and three of his brothers in uniform. Underneath Charles' picture was a caption reading that he was "to be invalided home with rheumatism". Communication in those days was haphazard; how melancholic it would have been in the household when the truth finally filtered back to Pontygroaith. ■



Exactly how and where did Charlie die?

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# Image from the past: Chromotype portraits

Your old photographs analysed by our expert Audrey Linkman

**W**ith its attractive purple-plum tone and glossy finish, the chromotype certainly stands out from the rest of the silver prints in the Victorian family album. This example drew the eye of its present owner, Peter Graham, who lives in Staffordshire. Peter wants to know precisely what is meant by the word 'chromotype portrait' and asks if it can help with dating. Oh, yes, it can...

## CHROMOTYPES

This photograph comprises a standard carte de visite cardboard mount onto which has been pasted a photograph impressed with the words: Patent Permanent Chromotype Portrait. The chromotype portrait is itself mounted on thickish card, which has caused the conventional mount to buckle. Chromotype photographs were made using carbon, not silver. Unlike silver prints which tend to fade over time, carbon has the advantage of permanence. Carbon was employed commercially for cartes and cabinets in Britain following a promotional tour of the country by the French inventor of the chromotype process in 1875 and 1876. Most British chromotypes date to the late 1870s or early 1880s.



## ARMS AKIMBO

Posing was considered an important element in the photographer's management of the sitter. Photographers' artistic capabilities were judged by their skill in posing. Poses were selected to highlight a sitter's physical attractions and hide perceived deficiencies or disfigurement. Ideally, the pose should be fluid, graceful and elegant, as these were the qualities that characterised the genteel in society. Since pose was also a way of conveying character, sexual stereotyping came into play. Unlike women, men were permitted to cross their legs and pose with arms akimbo. Such poses projected essentially male characteristics - confidence, authority and ease with the world.

## POSING POOCH

Animals were regularly taken to the studio to be photographed with their owners and proved particularly challenging sitters prior to the availability of faster, ready-made negatives in 1879. The earlier collodion negatives were made by the photographer before exposure which could last over 30 seconds. Sudden movements by the animal resulted in spoilt plates and the additional expenditure of time and money in producing new ones. Photographers were advised to proffer some tasty, tempting morsel out of camera range to attract the dog's interest. Perhaps underexposure here contributed to the significant lack of contrast between the man's jacket and the backdrop.



### JAMES GREY

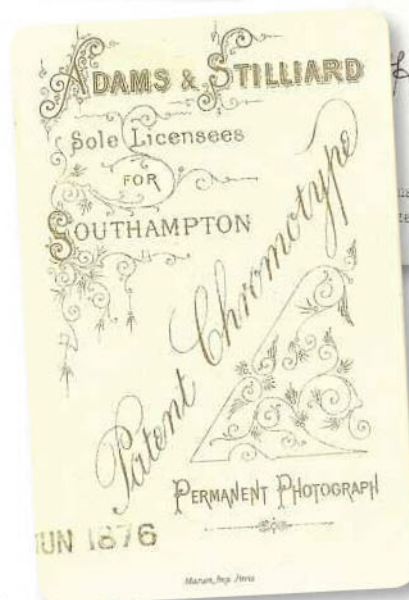
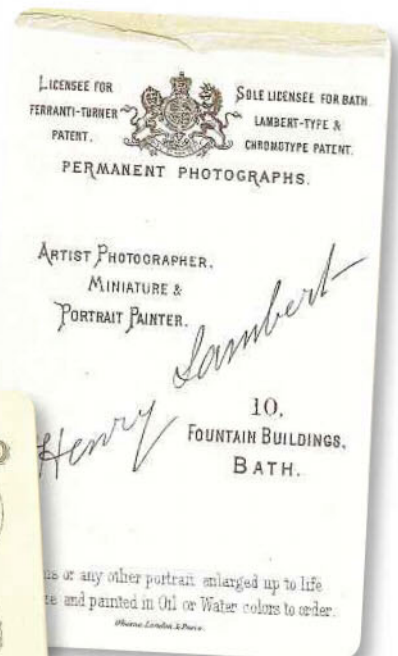
CG Scott's 'Photographers in Devon, 1842-1939' (in *The PhotoHistorian Supplement* No 101, Summer 1993), indicates that the firm of James Grey was situated in Union Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth from 1865 to 1915. Until 1886, the studio address is given at different times as 60, 61, 62 or 63, Union Street. So, for example, James Grey is listed at 61 Union Street in 1865, 60 Union Street in 1873, 61 in 1875 and 63 in 1876. It is possible that these numbers may indeed all refer to the same studio. In 1885/6, the firm claimed to have been established 25 years.

### CARBON CARTES

The carbon process was invented by Joseph Swan in 1864 and came increasingly to be used for enlarged framed portraits from the early 1870s. Its application to cartes and cabinets had to await the modifications invented by a Frenchman, Claude Leon Lambert. In 1875, the year he patented these inventions in Britain, Lambert also undertook a promotional tour to places such as Bradford and Liverpool where he gave personal demonstrations and private instructions to those photographers who were prepared to pay the £20 required to become a licensee. Photographers usually purchased the rights to become the sole licensee for a given town or district. The reward for those photographers who were prepared to make the effort to master this extremely difficult process was the ability to charge high prices for an exclusive product. Jabez Hughes, who photographed royalty in his Isle of Wight studio, charged 18 shillings (80p) for a dozen carbon cartes de visite, which compares very favourably with the 3s 6d (17½p) to 5s (25p) per dozen charged by those who worked at the opposite end of the commercial spectrum. We can safely conclude that these photographers targeted an affluent clientele. However, the process was very difficult and problematic, being described as 'anxious, messy, uncertain work'. As early as 1879 it was claimed that many licensees had either abandoned it altogether or used it only in special cases. Most surviving examples usually feature the words 'permanent' and 'chromotype' which makes them easy to identify.

### LONDON CHIC

Photographers used the verso of cartes and cabinets to advertise their address[es], goods and services. James Grey appears particularly concerned to establish his position within the pecking order of Plymouth photographers. His claim to be 'From CE Goodman, 5 New Bond Street, London' was intended to suggest that he brought metropolitan style to provincial Plymouth. He may have trained with Claudius Erskine Goodman (1821-1873), who, according to the PhotoLondon website ([www.photolondon.org.uk](http://www.photolondon.org.uk)), had a studio at 118 New Bond Street from 1856 to 1859. His status as the district's sole licensee (not patentee) for the expensive chromotype indicates he targeted an exclusive clientele.



### FREE IMAGE ANALYSIS

Do you have a photograph that you're having trouble dating or identifying? Send it (recorded delivery) to us for expert analysis at this address: *Image From The Past, Your Family Tree, Studio One, Sheep Street, Charlbury OX7 3RR*. We only accept original photographs for analysis and we regret that not every photograph received can be analysed and printed here. All photos will be returned.



### By Audrey Linkman



Audrey writes and lectures on photohistory specialising in family and domestic photography. Her book, *The Victorians: Photographic Portraits* (Tauris Parke Books, 1993), concentrates on the Victorian family album.



# How to...

Track your creative and innovative ancestors down

I'm particularly pleased to have an article on copyright and patent records in this month's issue. These are resources that you may not have thought of in relation to your family history – yet the Victorian period, in particular, was an era of invention, and many of us may have had creative or imaginative ancestors who wanted to protect the ideas they had produced. David Lewiston Sharpe takes us through the records that may help you identify these inventors in your family,

and what creations they conjured up.

Many of you will have had family members who were nurses, and so Michelle Higgs's feature on tracking these ancestors down will strike a chord with many readers. Michelle looks at the various types of nurses and what training was required of them – the differences might surprise you.

Colin Waters this month looks at foundry workers, who have been responsible for producing a variety of goods over the centuries, and continue to make the

likes of church bells today; we take a closer look at the electoral registers put online by Findmypast recently; Kev Lochun looks at a World War 2 battle that took

place in Egypt; and, closer to home, we go in search of ancient ancestors in deepest, darkest Wiltshire in our YFT Recommends feature. So, as usual, we aim this month to highlight a variety of records and places, and give you continued inspiration in your family history research.

However, we're not promising to always run the gamut from Neolithic onwards – we're not sure the records are quite there yet! ■

**Nell Darby**

Editor  
yft@historymags.co.uk

“

The Victorian period, in particular, was an era of invention, and many of us may have had creative ancestors

## In this issue...

Whether you're a beginner or expert, there's something for everyone



### GET STARTED: NURSING RECORDS

**52** Michelle Higgs looks at the history of nursing, and the ways in which you can find the Florence Nightingales in your own family.



### LOOKING ONLINE: COPYRIGHT & PATENT RECORDS

**56** Was your ancestor an inventor, or just have a good idea that he or she wanted to register? We show you how to find out.



### HANDS ON: PUBLISHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

**60** Do you want to publish a book about your family history? Nick Peers shows you the easiest ways to do so.



### YFT RECOMMENDS: STONEHENGE

**62** We go back in time to our ancient ancestors, with a look at changes made to the Stonehenge area – how does it alter our experience of visiting the stones?



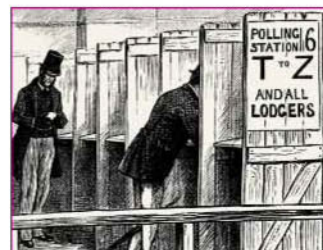
### OCCUPATIONS: FOUNDRY WORKERS

**64** Brass, bronze and bells: we look at those who worked in, or ran, foundries – producing everything from cannon balls to candlesticks and church bells.



### MILITARY HISTORY: THE BATTLE OF SIDI BARRANI

**68** This month, we go to the Middle East, and look at a key fight that took place during World War 2 – the Battle of Sidi Barrani.



### GOING FURTHER: ELECTORAL RECORDS

**72** Following on from the British Library and Findmypast's recent release of electoral registers online, we look in more depth at what they can tell you.

## The 7 Golden Rules

If you're new to family history these principles will help you get the most from your time

### WORK BACKWARDS

**1** However you go about your research, start with yourself and work backwards by generation. This will ensure you have verified your sources at each stage

### BE ORGANISED AND HONEST

**2** You must be systematic and methodical, as you'll inevitably collect a lot of information. Start with a simple filing system, and keep certificates and documents safe

### START WITH YOUR LIVING RELATIVES

**3** Gather together all the available birth, marriage and death certificates. Talk to as many relatives as possible, especially the eldest, as they'll all have useful information

### SET YOUR SIGHTS

**4** Don't try to research your entire ancestry at once: the data will overwhelm you. Decide early on which branch you want to concentrate on first of all

### UNDERSTAND SURNAMES

**5** Surnames are usually derived from places, occupations, nicknames or an early father-son relationship. The rarer the name, the easier searches usually are

### CLASSES & SOCIETIES

**6** It's always worth joining a family history society to get a good grounding in the research basics, and meet others with a similar interest. Check the full list of societies at <http://tinyurl.com/8oqjl2y>

### USE THE RESOURCES THAT YOU HAVE

**7** Technology is becoming an ever more vital part of family history research. Don't be afraid to make use of a computer and the internet

## Step-by-step: How to get your free resources

It's never been easier to explore free records and genealogical resources every issue

Simply go to [www.yourfamilytreemag.co.uk/latest-issue](http://www.yourfamilytreemag.co.uk/latest-issue) in your browser. Once there you'll be presented with details of this issue, and below that a list of download links for this month's resources. Also available is an index to all the main articles in the magazine since we started in 2003, plus some useful genealogy forms to aid your research.

Hover your mouse over the link you want and click – this will take you to the resources, hosted at the Dropbox website. If you click the blue download button, the document(s) will start to download automatically and either be saved directly to you via the downloads folder on your computer, or a location of your choosing.

Note that the data is sometimes zipped, so you'll need to double click on the .zip file on your computer to open it up. If you want another resource, simply repeat the process.

If you missed the downloads from a previous month, we now have an archive of recent links at [www.historymags.co.uk/yft](http://www.historymags.co.uk/yft). ■



## Going further: Digital downloads

Free resources for finding Liverpool family, real-life reader case studies and much more online now!

**E**very month you can find an exclusive collection of records on our website to help you get further with your family history research and the articles in this issue. You can find these great resources at [www.yourfamilytreemag.co.uk/latest-issue](http://www.yourfamilytreemag.co.uk/latest-issue).

YFT has teamed up with TheGenealogist to give readers free access to the 1881 census for Lancashire. This accompanies the article on research in the region on page 38. Simply go to [www.thegenealogist.co.uk/yftfree](http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/yftfree) and type in the code

853942 to get free access to the census for one month and track down ancestors in the county using state-of-the-art search features.

We've also got other Liverpool resources to

help you find your family in the county, with names from the city that appear in Slater's Directory for Lancashire, 1848. This data has been kindly supplied by Direct Resources and you can buy the full directory from [www.direct-resources.uk.com](http://www.direct-resources.uk.com).

You can also find inspiration from great research stories in our two case studies from the archive, one on a reader's ancestor who became Britain's first female registrar, and the other focusing on a Liverpool docker standing up against fascism in the 1930s.

If you're looking to organise your research, you can also download a series of useful forms and charts designed by the YFT experts. ■



### EVERY ARTICLE INDEXED

Each month we upload a complete index of every article from all 163 issues to help you catch up!



# Get started: Nurses

**Michelle Higgs** explains how nursing became a profession – and how new records were created, providing details about training and qualifications

**B**efore the 1860s and 1870s, hospitals were staffed with untrained nurses who were often illiterate. These women came from the same social class as their patients, which meant they could put them at ease in the strange environment of the hospital. It was common for nurses to sleep close to the patients, either in a partitioned area of the ward or in cubicles between the wards. These 'old style' nurses were employed in hospitals until the last quarter of the 19th century.

In the early Victorian period, nurses' duties were extremely limited and included changing beds, cleaning the wards and feeding patients, plus helping with dressings and applying poultices. As the 'pupil' system of assistants for physicians and surgeons gradually died out, nurses took over the jobs they had done.

By 1860, the usual route into nursing in hospitals was to be appointed as a 'scrubber' or wardmaid, and to be promoted to a nurse after a period of good service. There was no system of training and little incentive towards career progression in terms of salary, accommodation or working conditions.

## NURSING REFORMS

The reform of nursing was a gradual process that started in 1860 with Florence Nightingale establishing her training school at St Thomas' Hospital under the Nightingale Fund. The first trainees, or 'probationers', were drawn from the working classes. They were given free



The President Ward, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, c1900 (author's collection)



training, rations of tea and sugar, washing, some outer clothing and £10 for their one year long course. They had to be unmarried or widowed, without dependent children, and this became standard for nurses across Britain. A gratuity of £3 or £5 was also granted to them, depending on which class of award they had achieved after completing their training year and serving in a hospital for the sick poor.

Once trained, the Nightingale nurses were known as 'sisters'. The training system was by no means perfect, but Nightingales were in great demand by British hospitals. After 1867, Florence Nightingale actively recruited better educated trainees who were specifically intended to be superintendent nurses. These new recruits, known as 'specials' or 'lady probationers', paid a fee for

'Notes at a London Hospital: The Nurse Old Style' and 'The Nurse New Style' (*The Graphic*, 27 December 1879)



The usual route into hospital nursing was to be appointed as a 'scrubber'



their board, lodging and training.

## DEVELOPING NURSES' TRAINING

Most large hospitals had adopted a variation of the probationer nurse training system by the 1870s and 1880s. Probationers were made up of ordinary nurses who were paid by the hospital during their training period, and 'lady probationers', who paid to be trained. Nurses could not continue their careers if they got married, so a constant supply of probationers was needed. By the 1880s, nursing was a respectable profession for working-class girls and women who would previously have gone into domestic service; it was also attractive to middle-class girls. Training nurses effectively in practical activities and theory became even more important when antiseptic and aseptic techniques were introduced so lectures were added to nurses' training.



Florence Nightingale at the British military hospital at Scutari, 1855

## WORKING IN HOSPITALS

If your ancestor was a nurse, you can be sure she was extremely hard-working. Nursing was a strenuous job with very long hours. Before the separate class of scrubbers and wardmaids

was introduced, nurses had to clean the wards as well as doing the nursing. In the late 1880s at The London Hospital, day nurses worked 14 hours with two hours off, while the night nurses worked 12; this was fairly standard. Days off were rare, but there was a fortnight's annual holiday. ▶

“

If your ancestor was a nurse, you can be sure she was extremely hard-working

# Top three: Sources for finding nurses

Try these three key sources to help you find your nursing ancestor



## ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING ARCHIVE

**1** Dedicated to the history of UK nursing, the Royal College of Nursing Archive holds a vast collection of records, images, oral history recordings and objects. It also has collections from other nursing organisations and individuals including badges, postcards, files and photographs. Browse the RCN website to find out more (<http://tinyurl.com/qa9eqlv>).



## WELLCOME LIBRARY

**2** The Wellcome Library holds the national Roll of the Queen's Nurses Institute (1891-1969) and badge registers for good service (1907-1945). There is a separate index to the Roll, and the collection is catalogued under SA/QNI. Browse the Archives and Manuscripts Catalogue to see the extent of the QNI collection (<http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/catalogues.html>).



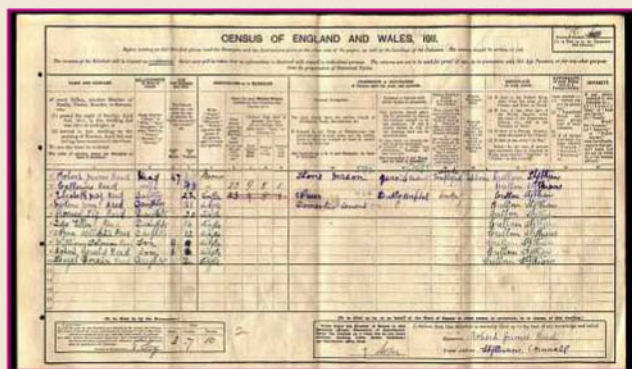
## THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

**3** The National Archives (TNA) holds the main source for registered midwives: the Midwives Roll (from 1902 onwards – reference DV7). It also has case files of the Penal Board for the Central Midwives Board (1904-1983), which dealt with complaints against midwives on the Roll. There is a 75-year closure period for these records (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>).



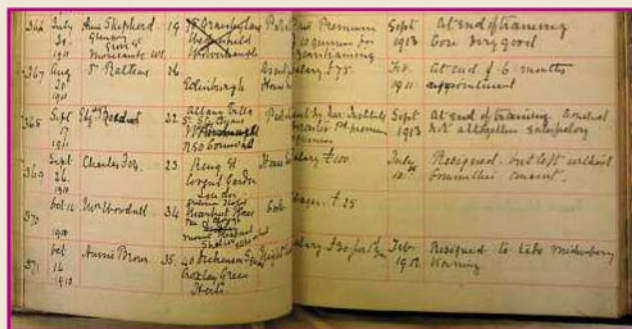
# Step-by-step: Trace a nurse

Follow the service of a nurse through a range of sources



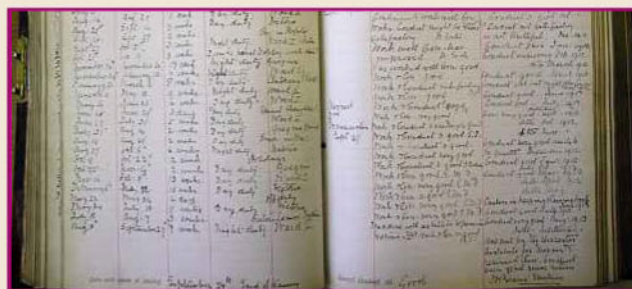
## 1911 CENSUS

**1** Seeing your ancestor listed on the census as a nurse can give you clues for further research, for instance, if she was living at the hospital where she worked. In April 1911, Nurse Elizabeth Mary Reed was on a visit home to Cornwall but helpfully names her employer – Dudley Hospital.



## REGISTER OF NURSES AND SERVANTS

**2** Elizabeth trained as a probationer at the Guest Hospital, Dudley, and its Register of Nurses and Servants is held at Dudley Archives. It provides her home address, her age, starting date and the terms of engagement. Elizabeth was sent there by the Nursing Institute in Worcester, having paid a premium of 10 guineas.



## PROBATIONER REGISTER

**3** This Probationer Register from the Guest Hospital, Dudley, provides some illuminating detail about Elizabeth's three years of training. It records which wards she worked on, how often she did day and night duty, and includes reports about her work and conduct by the Sister and Matron. Elizabeth went on to train as a Queen's Nurse.

“

You may find information about your forebear's progress during her probationer training



An unidentified Victorian nurse, c.1885 (author's collection)

The accommodation for nurses also left a lot to be desired because many hospitals adapted existing properties or areas between wards, rather than providing purpose-built nurses' homes. Conditions were frequently cramped and insanitary, and it was not until the late 1890s that most hospitals had their own nurses' home.

Once trained, a nurse could continue working in hospitals or choose to specialise as a midwife or a Queen's Nurse (district nursing); both required further training.

## NURSING RECORDS BEFORE 1922

The year 1922 is an important year in nursing history. Before then, there was no central registration of civilian nurses. However, if your ancestor was a nurse prior to 1922 and the records still exist, you could find out more about her training and career from the hospital(s) in which she



'The Nurses' Sitting-Room at The London', 1900 (The Windsor Magazine)

worked. Start by searching the Hospital Records Database ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/hospitalrecords](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/hospitalrecords)). This allows you to search for 'Staff' or 'Nursing' records under the name of the town or hospital, and shows you where existing records are held. You can then contact the relevant archive to find out which dates are covered. If you're lucky, you may find information about your forebear's progress during her probationer training and details of where she nursed after qualifying. However, in the majority of cases, you will simply find the dates between which your ancestor trained and where she was based. There are also some nursing registers for Scotland that pre-date state registration; they are held by National Records of Scotland (<http://tinyurl.com/nlp3ve9>).

If your ancestor was a nurse between 1888 and 1956, have a look at the Nursing Record (later the British Journal of Nursing) – this has





A private nurse with an elderly patient, c1905 (author's collection)

been digitised by the Royal College of Nursing (<http://rcnarchive.rcn.org.uk>). There is a searchable database so it's well worth checking for the name you're interested in, as the publication listed appointments, promotions and obituaries.

Bear in mind that although a woman may be listed on the census as a nurse, that did not necessarily mean she was trained or qualified. If she was carrying out nursing work but had never been formally trained, you're unlikely to find her in the available records.



A woman may be listed on the census as a nurse, but that did not necessarily mean she was qualified

## NURSING RECORDS AFTER 1922

From 1922, the Register of Nurses lists registered nurses including the registration date and number, address, and place and date of qualification. It covers England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland – although Ireland started publishing its register a year earlier. At first, the register was split into General, Mental, Male, Fever and Sick Children's sections; if you can't find your ancestor at the front, don't forget to check the other parts at the back, including the list of late entries. A nurse listed in the General section of the register was a State Registered Nurse (SRN), but in Scotland, the title was Registered General Nurse (RGN). After the 1943 Nurses Act, it was compulsory for nurses to be registered. Another list – the Roll of Nurses – appeared after 1943; this was for the Assistant Nurse, later called the State Enrolled Nurse (SEN). This qualification

was below that of the SRN. To consult the Register of Nurses or the Roll of Nurses, you'll need to visit one of the libraries which hold copies. The Royal College of Nursing Library and Archive Services website lists their locations (<http://tinyurl.com/kbouwcp>). ■



**Michelle Higgs** is a freelance writer and the author of eight social history books, including

*Tracing Your Medical Ancestors* (Pen & Sword) and *Life in the Victorian Hospital* (The History Press).

## CONTACTS

### The Hospital Records Database

Use this database to locate surviving staff records for hospitals.

**w.** <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/hospitalrecords/>

### Royal College of Nursing Archives

42 South Oswald Road, Edinburgh EH9 2HH

**w.** <http://tinyurl.com/qa9eqvlv>

**e.** [archives@rcn.org.uk](mailto:archives@rcn.org.uk)

### Royal College of Nursing Library and Heritage Services

20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN

**w.** <http://tinyurl.com/pc6u7k5>

**e.** [rcn.library@rcn.org.uk](mailto:rcn.library@rcn.org.uk)

**t.** 0345 337 3368

### Wellcome Library

183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE

**w.** <http://www.wellcomelibrary.org/>

**e.** [library@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:library@wellcome.ac.uk)

**t.** 020 7611 8722

### The National Archives

Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU

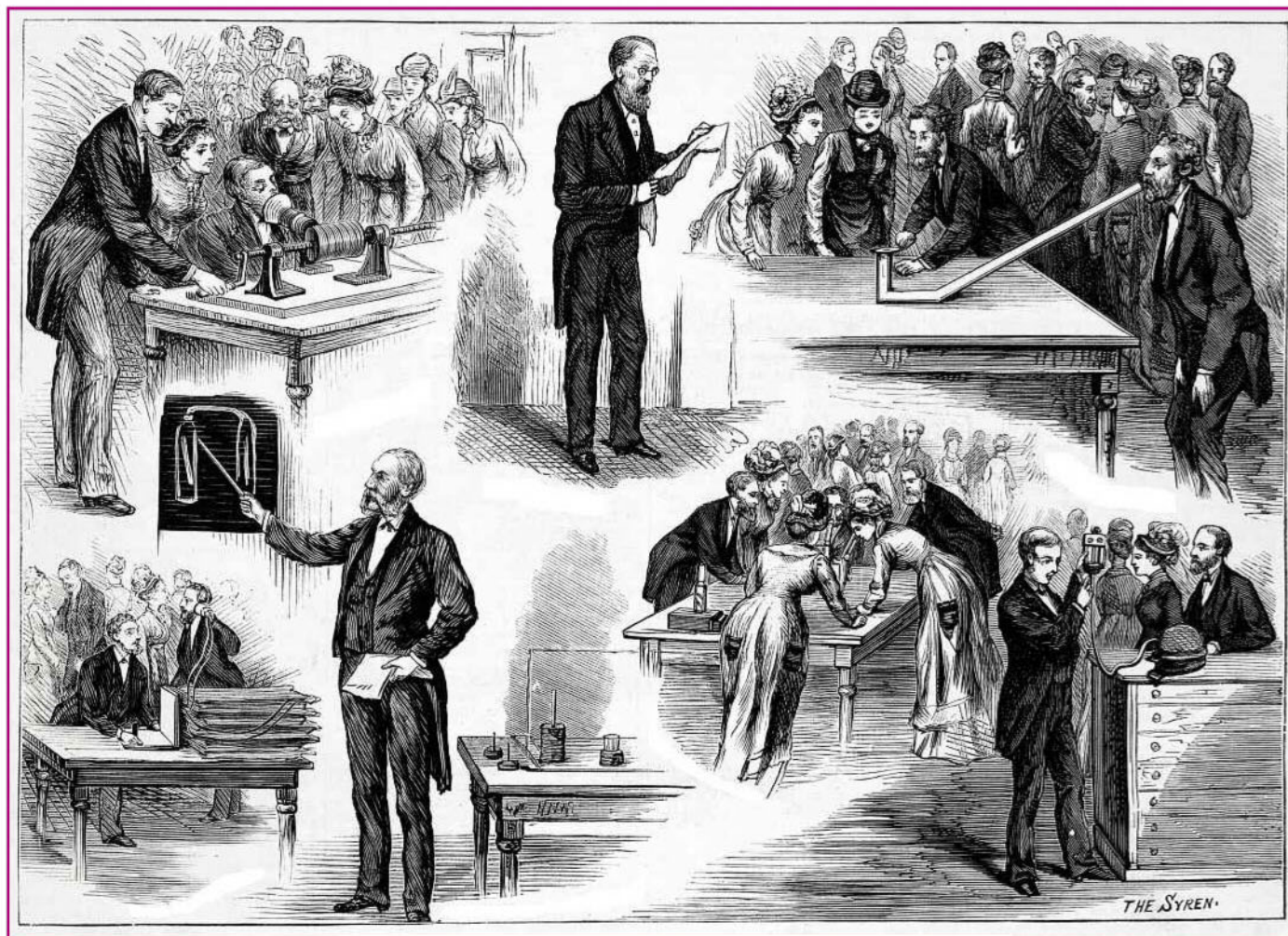
**w.** <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

**t.** 020 8876 3444



# Looking online: Patent and registered design records

Inventive ancestors who left some official record of their commercial or conceptual endeavours can show how they strove to make a mark, writes **David Lewiston Sharpe**



**T**he National Archives holds a wealth of information on the designs, large and small, that everyone – from heavy commercial operations to back street tinkerers – sought to promote as original, useful and worthy of financial return. The process by which an innovative design, or modification of an existing utility, was put on record can appear, on the face of it, to be a dry and formal administrative function. But

such details as names, places, including the address of the designer or patentee, and nature of the commodity – and even their own words, if descriptions survive – can flesh out our family histories in novel ways.

## MAKING HISTORY

In Britain, the history of patents goes back formally to the 17th century, when a government statute was implemented in 1624. This was the first time that a

patentee could claim "the sole making or working of any manner of new manufacture within this realm to the first and true inventor", although just for the period of 14 years. Much later, during the 19th century, statistics for patents reveal a remarkable burgeoning of activity. The lean figures for 1800 show 96 patents, but this grew, through a staggering proportional increase of 14,000 per cent, to 13,710 by 1900. But, for the Victorians,

Was your ancestor an inventor? If they registered designs and patents, you may be able to learn more about them and their creations

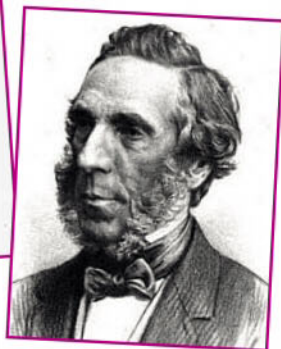


During the 19th century, patent statistics reveal a remarkable burgeoning of activity



Left: Yates stove: The patented stove by James Yates' company, as shown in a contemporary patents and designs journal

Below: James Yates (1798–1881) was an entrepreneur and industrialist whose patented stove can be found in TNA records



other figures reveal the widely prohibitive cost – £400 would have to be forked out for such a privilege of patent. This could rise to £700 if the application was to be extended by Act of Parliament.

Even now, the cost of registering and maintaining a patent is an expensive business, and exceeds £20,000. In the 19th century, registering a design was somewhat cheaper. However, the £10 required was no doubt a considerable sum for most people, even including the most ambitious among the 'amateurs' and lone operators among the lower classes. That smaller fee bought you three years' copyright protection, as opposed to the 14 years that a patent still covered by this time. It was also easier, as the bureaucracy of obtaining a patent entailed visits to as many as 17 different offices and authorities and an unfolding tariff of attendant costs.

There are records relating broadly to three areas of interest under this topic, and held by the National Archives (TNA) – they cover Patents, Registered Designs and Trade Marks. These are all held as part of the collection relating to the Board of Trade and its successor governmental bodies, including the Patent Office, set up in 1852. There is much detail on individuals to

be found in these 'BT'-tagged records at TNA, set down in the 19th century following various design acts from the late 1830s onwards.

Earlier, in the 18th century, a number of advances had been made in establishing more detailed claims on ideas and their assertions of originality. James Puckle, who ominously patented the first 'machine gun' in 1718, was nonetheless an entrepreneurial spirit who saw the value of trade and commerce as the lifeblood of a population. In his 1733 literary work *The Club*, an imagined didactic dialogue between father and son, he asserted that, "trade is the fountain whence we draw our nourishment... the value of our rents, products, and manufactures do all wax and wane with trade". During the immediately preceding reign of Queen Anne, patents had, for the first time, to lay out in descriptive detail the function of the invention. This was standard by 1734. Puckle's Gun – number 418 – was among the first in the early decades of the 18th century.

## TAKING THE REGISTER

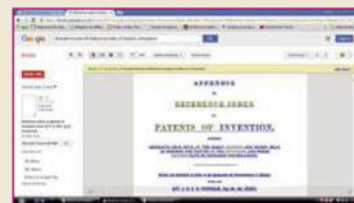
Registered designs make their appearance in a two-tiered system of

# Top three: TNA records

There are a variety of patent-related sources at The National Archives

## REFERENCE INDEX OF PATENTS

1 TNA's research guide on patents of invention points you to a resource published by Bennet Woodcroft in the mid-19th century, called Reference Index of Patents of Invention. This looks at the early periods of patents, going back as far as March 1617. An appendix to this index includes surviving abstracts from early patents describing, and importantly naming, the patentees of inventions from the 17th and 18th centuries. Although it is limited, amounting to just a few hundred, it is points the way to further research.



## THEINVENTORS

2 Online repository TheInventors ([www.theinventors.org](http://www.theinventors.org)) presents century-by-century overviews of inventions. The website doesn't appear to have been updated recently, but it can also be found at <http://inventors.about.com>. There are also thematic categories, such as women inventors, and 'wacky weird gadgets'. The 19th century innovations of industry aside, the site gives details on individuals from William Oughtred (inventor of the slide rule in 1624) to Arthur Wynne's invention of the crossword puzzle just prior to World War 1, and beyond.



## BRITISH NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE

3 A great many new patents and registered designs made their way into the regional press once they had been recorded at the Patent Office. Subscribing to the British Newspaper Archive ([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)) will give you access to many references and articles about patents, as well as correspondence relating to important innovations as they made wider impact; this reveals more useful instances of names and places. Anyone who had registered a design, even if the newspaper in question was in Nottingham or Dundee, would have their name and address printed.



## Early records

Be careful about the terminology in early records. There can be confusion about patents, 'letters patent', and the earlier designation whereby patents referred less to invention and design, rather to property and commercial or financial activity.



# Step-by-step: Find an ancestor's patent or design

Use the web to find evidence of your inventive ancestor's plans



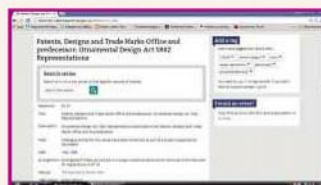
## DISCOVERY

**1** The easiest way to search is via the TNA's Discovery site (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>). Although it throws up a mix of data, if you search using the 'shelfmarks' for the Board of Trade ('BT' plus number) this will hone in on the general area of relevant records.



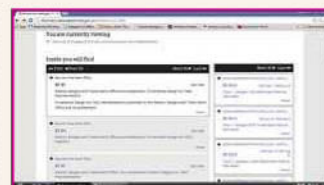
## SUBDIVISIONS

**2** If you search for Division 26 of the BT sequence, that gives you the sections covering Patents, Design and Trade Marks. There are 11 main subdivisions (BT 42 to BT 53) which hold the relevant records. Some other sets were destroyed in 1961, but samples are available under BT 900.



## SEARCH FURTHER

**3** Under BT 43, you will be find records for the period 1842-1885. These comprise representations submitted in respect of the 1842 Patents Act; BT 44 holds registers of designs and proprietors' index. 'Context of this record' shows where you are in the convoluted sub-files.



## NATURE OF DESIGN

**4** Click on 'Browse by reference' and you will see design representations by class (listed on the right) which are ordered by the nature of the design - metal, wood, glass, etc - depending on the medium in which your ancestors worked. Note that these classes change within each set.

## Google search

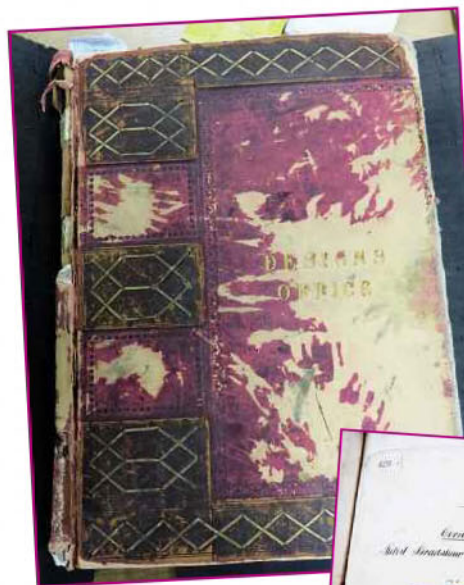
It is perfectly possible to find TNA records via a simple search on Google. If you search for James Yates in Rotherham and add his 'stove' invention', the records on Discovery are returned on the first page of Google results, so it's worth trying different methods of searching if you can't find what you want initially.

► administration. TNA holds ledgers of application and volumes with the designs themselves alongside written descriptions. The applications list the allocated number of the application, with the proprietor's name, address (often just the town or county, but sometimes a street address too) and the designation of their invention. In the hefty tomes in which the designs' illustrations are presented in greater detail, the proprietor had to supply a picture or diagram. This was given in duplicate, a copy of which was stamped and retained by the applicant. A description was also provided and entered by the registration agents. This latter record gives you an insight into the minds of your ancestors in a way that is both unique and immediate. In

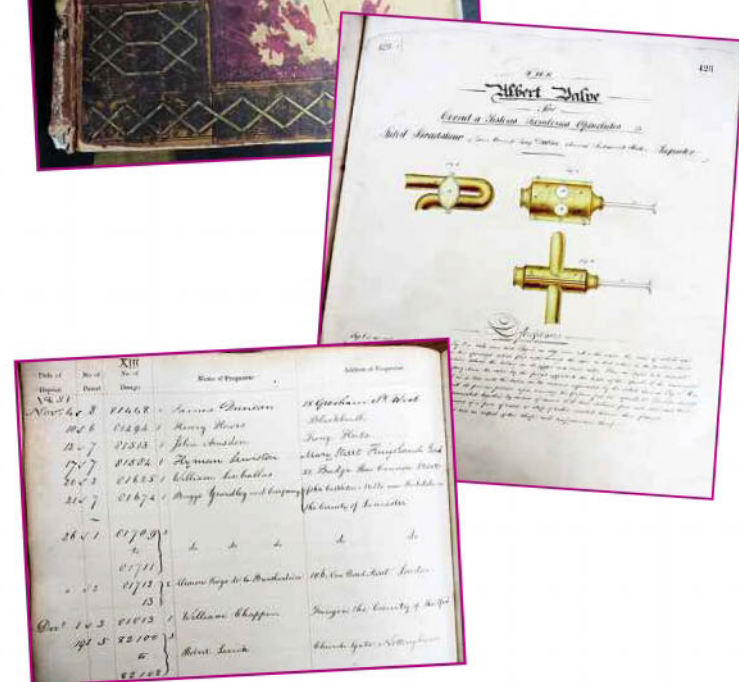
some sense, it is as though, for a moment, you can hear them speaking.

It is not always likely that family records would preserve the stamped design copy, but if they do, then finding the registration record will be easier. This is potentially more likely if the invention was the product of a company rather than an individual. If so, details pertinent to anything genealogical may prove scant in light of commercial concerns. But an individual's name may at least make an appearance. It is possible, of course, if the ancestor in question was fairly productive

Right: 'One of the 'spreadsheet' entry lists with cursory registration details of design owner names and addresses.



Left: One of the heavily bound ledgers from among the 19th-century Designs Office records.



Below: One of the page-long registrations, showing heading, diagram illustration and detailed description supplied via the proprietor of the design.

Right: Journals such as *The Engineer* (founded in 1856 and still going today) often showed details of new inventions. Issues of *The Engineer* from 1856-1960 can be found online at [www.gracesguide.co.uk](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk)



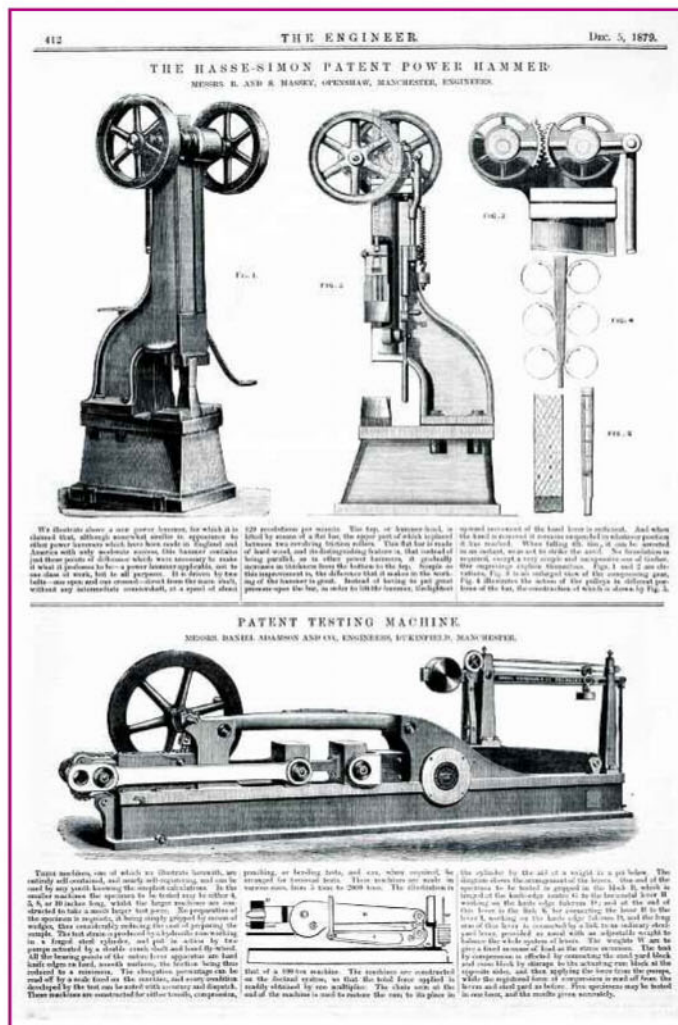
## INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

5 Click on BT 43/1 and you will see, on right, the individual design representation records list with the design number, proprietor, address, with subject and class of their invention. So here, we have /BT 43/1/1425, Design Number 1425, James Yates, Effingham Works, Rotherham, Yorkshire, Subject: Stove, Class 1: Metal'.

and in any way assiduous in applying for recognised control of original work, to find multiple entries in the ledgers across the decades. Sometimes this might entail lateral thinking in terms of names, companies and locations – but much detail can be drawn to the surface with a little digging around. Once the idea was 'out there', more so in the 19th century and since, the mechanisms of communication and publication made ideas flourish rather more of their own accord.

## PRESS AND PUBLICITY

Journals such as the *Mechanics Magazine*, *Museum*, *Register*, *Journal* and *Gazette* and later variously subtitled as the *Journal of Science*, *Arts and Manufactures* and the *Journal of Engineering*, *Agricultural*



Machinery, Manufactures and Shipbuilding broadcast and enlarge on the information carried by the design registration process. This journal had started out in September 1823 with the aim of presenting the new wave of invention that emerged after the "cessation of the great wars of the first French republic". It ran until 1857, but the name apparently continued under varied titles for some years after. This journal had a circulation of 16,000, even in its first year, and the illustrations and letters pages give voice to people from the past. Patents, too, are listed with names of patentees and proprietors; this can help locate their work, as well as serving to illustrate status, origin and progress – assuming their innovations had 'legs'.

The regional press picked up on what was formally

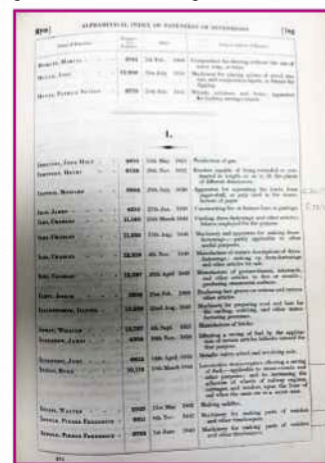
recorded by the Patent Office, and names could find their way into 'the provinces' and reveal how a temporary fame, even as a peripheral whisper, would have been heard countrywide. A search among the references to patents in the wider press from the beginning of the 18th century up to 1900 shows an increase in publicity to upwards of four million articles, citing details about patents and designs in the press. So it is worthwhile, if industry and innovation are known threads in your family's history, to search the newspapers online too.

With subscriptions for online newspaper archives available, and record copying possible via TNA, an increasing amount of research can be done online, without leaving the house. It is worth pursuing these various avenues to seek out newly available information on your

## Lists of patents

In addition to *Woodcroft's Reference Index*, consult the *Alphabetical Index of Patentees and Applicants for Patents of Invention* (also edited by Woodcroft). This gives the names of patentees, whereas the Index lists locations of records and primary sources, such as *Rolls Chapel*, *London Journal*, *Mechanics' Magazine*, and so on.

A page from Woodcroft's *Alphabetical Index of Patentees and Applicants for Patents of Invention* – an indispensable guide to ancestral designers.



ancestors' novel ideas. The ubiquitous Google Books is no less useful in this respect: in particular, some 19th century journals on science, industry and manufacturing are viewable (scanned from global library collections) via the web. ■

## By David Lewiston Sharpe



David Lewiston Sharpe is a freelance composer, writer and

teacher, and has published on history, genealogy, language, Egyptology, and the arts. He has been researching his family history for over 20 years, tracing lines as far afield as Ireland and Poland.



# Hands-on: Publish your family story

Nick Peers explores the ins and outs of getting your family history published professionally in paper book format – for minimal cost

Everybody's family has at least one story to tell, and if you've gone to the bother of researching and writing it up, why not take the next logical step and publish it? Electronic publishing has become all the vogue, but there's something satisfying about holding a professionally printed copy of your work in your hand. And thanks to self-publishing services, it's never been easier (or cheaper) to become a published author.

There are a number of routes and services you can follow when it comes to self-publishing. Photobook services offer a good, if expensive, way of showcasing your family photos and associated stories, and one of the most versatile is CEWE ([www.photoworld.com](http://www.photoworld.com)), thanks to its free Photoworld app. If you're an Ancestry user, then take a look at MyCanvas ([www.mycanvas.com](http://www.mycanvas.com)) – it offers a family history book option that can present the data in your Ancestry-hosted tree in book form. Click Print, then choose the Book Option to transfer your existing tree and uploaded photos to it before creating a new project.

Maybe you've got all the raw materials for a great story, but don't have the time or confidence to write the book yourself – check out the box for details of an online publishing service called StoryTerrace, which does all the hard work for you.

## SELF-PUBLISHING FOR REAL

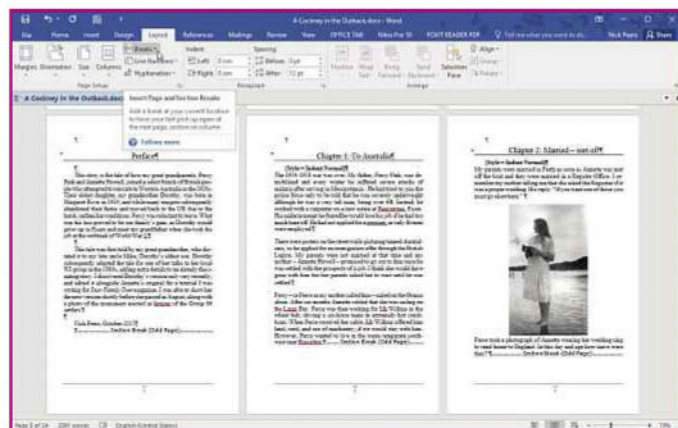
If you're looking to publish your own completed story,

then a self-publishing service is the way to go. One of the most user-friendly options is offered by Dutch company Blurb ([www.blurb.co.uk](http://www.blurb.co.uk)). It provides a user-friendly tool called BookWright to format your book prior to publishing, and the step-by-step guide reveals how it works. There's a wide range of printed options available. Those on tight budgets should investigate the economy soft paperback option, which allows you to publish a 24-page book for as little as £1.49 per unit. Postage costs are a little steep – £6.99 plus £1.28 per additional copy – but it's ideally suited to small print runs, allowing you to print just a handful of copies as gifts for family and friends as well as investigating ways of trying to sell the book to a wider audience. Use the site's pricing calculator (at [www.blurb.co.uk/pricing-calculator](http://www.blurb.co.uk/pricing-calculator)) before you commit.

Two other services are worth exploring as possible alternatives. Lulu ([www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)) is the best known self-publishing service out there, and is joined by rival Amazon-owned CreateSpace ([www.createpace.com](http://www.createpace.com)). Both allow you to go it alone using a combination of free and paid-for tools, but also provide professional editing and design services should you need them. However, it's probably better to source your own, with whom you'll have a more personalised relationship.

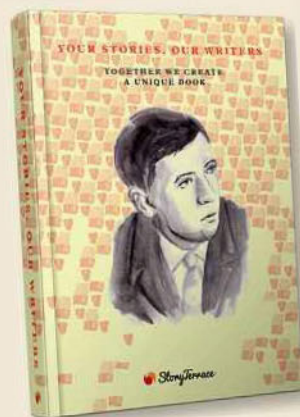
## ALTERNATIVE SERVICES

Both of these sites provide online wizards to step you



Format yourself: services like Lulu require you to format your book using a specially provided Word template

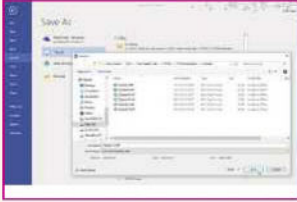
## Story Terrace



Companies like Story Terrace ([www.storyterrace.com](http://www.storyterrace.com)) are now making it easy to enlist the help of a professional ghostwriter to capture your family's stories and record them in a beautiful book. It has recently launched a series of packages, managing the full book-making process for you, to create a

snapshot of your past over a 10- to 12-week period. Story Terrace matches you with one of its experienced journalists and authors – from national newspapers and well-known UK publishers – who then help you to structure your findings over a series of organised interviews, selecting the best stories and photographs to feature to ensure the quality of your project is the best it can be. If you don't have the time to write your family history, or you want the unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience of being interviewed by a professional writer, you'll be in a safe pair of hands with Story Terrace. Packages start at £1200 for a 50-page book.

# Step-by-step: Publish your family history with Blurb



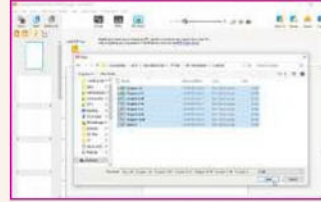
## PREPARE TEXT

**1** We've assumed you've already written your story. Open it in your word processor, and save each chapter separately as a Rich Text Format (RTF) file. Next, go to [www.blurb.co.uk](http://www.blurb.co.uk) and click the 'free easy-to-use software' software link under Create. Click 'Download BookWright' and sign up when prompted to download the free app.



## FIRST STEPS

**2** Install and then launch BookWright. Click 'Country: United States', change it to United Kingdom, and restart BookWright when prompted. Click 'Start a new Book', choose your book type (13x20 if you're going for the cheap paperback option) and click Next. Review the options and click 'Start a New Book' again.



## IMPORT STORY

**3** Give your project a suitable name and click 'Save'. The main window will open, with navigation tools to the left, available layouts to the top and the currently selected page in the main pane. First, click the 'RTF Import' button, click the 'Add RTF Files' button and select your RTF document.



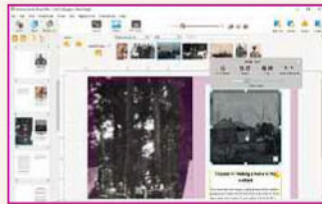
## PLACE ON PAGE

**4** Click on page 7 in the left-hand pane to select it. Now drag your first chapter into the right-hand page on-screen. You'll see a cursor with a plus sign appear – click on the page and a pop-up menu asking you to choose a layout will be shown. Select the MS Word Moderate or Normal option and click 'Apply Layout'.



## MAKE TEXT CHANGES

**5** Your text will flow into the document from page seven onwards. Move to the next available right-hand page and repeat the process for the next chapter until all your book has been imported. Click the text in a box to edit and style it up using word processor-like controls.



## FINE-TUNE DOCUMENTS

**6** Click the Layouts button at the top and experiment with tweaking the layout on individual pages (such as chapter openings), and use the Photos button to select photos from your collection to drag into your document. Also fill in the opening pages with a table of contents and other material.



## ADD A COVER

**7** Once your inside pages are complete, click the Covers button in the left-hand corner to set up your covers. Choose a background colour and paper type, then make sure you select the right cover (softcover is the cheapest) before adding photos and other text.



## GET PUBLISHED!

**8** Click the Preview button to see how your book will look when printed, and the Review button to make sure there are no potential problems. Finally, click 'Upload' to enter your book's details, assign a free ISBN and upload it to your account, ready for printing through the web.

through the process of creating and uploading your book, but you'll need to be comfortable working with Word templates and have a means of outputting your final book in PDF format for printing, plus employ some design skills on the cover.

When it comes to pricing, CreateSpace prices everything in US dollars, but offers a wider range of shipping options than Blurb with both cheaper and quicker choices available. Lulu's shipping options are more opaque, but it does offer locally printed

options to speed up delivery times (although production times aren't taken into account here).

Other considerations: if you plan to sell your book, there are some major hurdles to jump through. Certain types and sizes of paper

aren't supported for retail distribution, for example, while you'll need to provide payment and tax details. It's a good idea to review all guidelines provided by your chosen publisher – check its help pages for full details. ■



# YFT recommends: Stonehenge



You may not be able to trace your forebears to Neolithic times, but Stonehenge is at last worth visiting again, writes **Andrew Chapman**

Everyone's been to Stonehenge already, haven't they? Even if you haven't, you may be aware of the halcyon days of the early 1970s when it was still possible to meander among the stones themselves or, more likely, the eyesore of more modern times with high security fences, a prefab toilet block and a general feeling that this World Heritage site deserved better treatment. One TripAdvisor reviewer in 2006 pretty much summed it up: "I've never met anyone who was not disappointed by Stonehenge." With more than a million visitors a year (two thirds from overseas), that was of great concern.

But now everything has changed, and if you've avoided this extraordinary piece of ancient heritage, it's time to reconsider. Thanks to a lavish £27m scheme to rethink how visiting Stonehenge should work, a brand new visitor centre opened in December 2013, safely one and a half

miles away from the stones themselves. It met with mixed feelings to begin with, while the newly landscaped visitor centre and transport links were bedding in, but two years on, it feels like a great success.

Gone, for one thing, is the old A344 to Shrewton, which forced the monument itself into a corner between that and the A303, forever jammed with caravans heading for Cornwall. Re-routing the A344 was actually first proposed in 1927 – but now, at last, it has been done, and all that's left of the old leg by Stonehenge is a greened-over track which now looks like an ancient rural byway. The A303 remains as it was, clogged with slow drivers rubber-necking at the monument – there are hopes to add more lanes, though what that would mean for the astonishing archaeological density of this area is unclear.

Now, one arrives via a new roundabout on the A303 to a vast (and still growing) car park, mercifully out of sight

of Stonehenge itself. The visitor centre is unashamedly modern, and its 'Marmite' architecture probably means you'll love it or hate it – but either way, its sleek, low-slung curves feel an improvement. Inside is the inevitable gift shop, offering a vast array of model trilithons and the like, and the exhibition.

The latter offers a truly 21st century take on what we understand of the monument's history, focused around an impressive circular screen showing the monument through its history, and the changing seasons.

Also here are around 250 prehistoric objects, including a Neolithic skeleton, with informative labels – what a Victorian curator would have crammed into a single room has here been given an echoing modern space.

There's a little social history here, too – the 'Wish You Were Here' section (which opened in 2015 and runs until March



Above: The centrepiece of the exhibition is this almost-360° curved screen offering panoramic tours through Stonehenge's history

Below: Stonehenge's £27m visitor centre opened in December 2013, a shuttle bus ride away from the stones themselves





The reconfigured landscape, without the intrusion of the A344, allows surprisingly uninterrupted views of the mysterious monument



2016) showcases, for example, guidebooks to the monument since the first one, written by 'H Browne of Amesbury' in 1823, and the history of tourism.

Outside, meanwhile, five Neolithic-style houses have been built to show how the monument's builders may have lived. These are particularly well done, and add more of a human element to the visitor centre, which can feel a little cold in atmosphere.

But what really stands out is the new setting for the monument itself. From the centre, one can either

walk the 1.5 mile route along the former A344, or take a shuttle bus – these stop a respectful distance from the stones themselves. One still can't go right up and hug them, but one can stand surprisingly close, and it's even possible, if you choose your moment, to snap them in the view. The sweep of the landscape, featuring the Heel Stone, Avenue and Cursus, now feels much more open.

September 2015 saw the centenary of Stonehenge

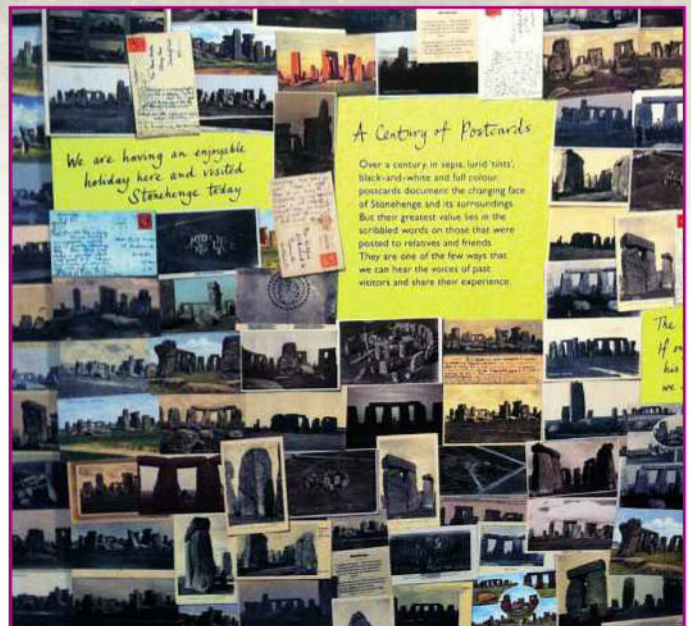
passing into the hands of Sir Cecil Chubb, a local barrister, asylum operator and racehorse breeder – he bought it at auction for £6600. It is thanks to him that the

monument passed into public hands (in 1918). For the first time in perhaps 40 years, it feels that his legacy and the landscape alike have been honoured. ■

#### VISITING STONEHENGE

Visitors are strongly recommended to book online in advance – timed slots are available to book via the web address below. There are some walk-up tickets available for visits on spec, but they will cost you more, and availability is by no means guaranteed. Adult tickets start at £14.50 (£13 concessions), children (5-15) £8.70.

**w.** [www.english-heritage.org.uk/stonehenge](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/stonehenge)  
**t.** 0370 333 1181



Above: This 'wall of postcards' in the exhibition area is a nice touch, showing a century of popular responses to Stonehenge

Left: A series of five mud and thatch huts has been built to help visitors imagine life in Neolithic times. They have their own blog at <https://neolithichouses.wordpress.com>. Inside the Stone Age homes is a central fireplace and hazel-twig bedding



# Occupations: Foundry workers

They were founders in more than one sense of the word - **Colin Waters** looks back at the workers who helped mould many of our family trees

**F**oundries of one sort or another have existed since man learned to melt and mould metal. Bells were perhaps the first large items to be manufactured in great numbers, but there were lots of workshops that manufactured smaller goods from gold, silver, brass, copper, iron and bronze, using raw materials including rough ores, ingots, scrap waste and recycled metal objects.

The manufacturing procedure was far from simple, and included many secret processes in order to ensure the final molten metal could be worked. These included the adding of fluxes, and secret processes for refining and 'de-gassing'. Once it was ready, the molten metal would be poured into moulds which had been manufactured using a variety of means including sand casting, die casting and billet (ingot) casting, to name but a few. If you're interested in exactly what your forbear's job involved, you can get a full overview of all the processes involved on the Wikipedia page at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foundry>.

In large foundries, the process involved a substantial



Lock making in a small 18th century back street foundry

workforce – but you'll find that many of our ancestors worked as sole traders in small back-street workshops where they served the needs of their local community. Although some foundries made a variety of products, others specialised in manufacturing specific items. The Suffolk Iron Foundry, for instance, which was developed in the 1920s, was known for its brass and other metal rods. It later diversified, and by 1937 had entered the domestic household market, producing mincing machines, scales and weights, mangles, electric fires and similar products. From 1960 onwards, when it was taken over by Qualcast, the

foundry became famous for its range of quality lawnmowers.

## WORKPLACES

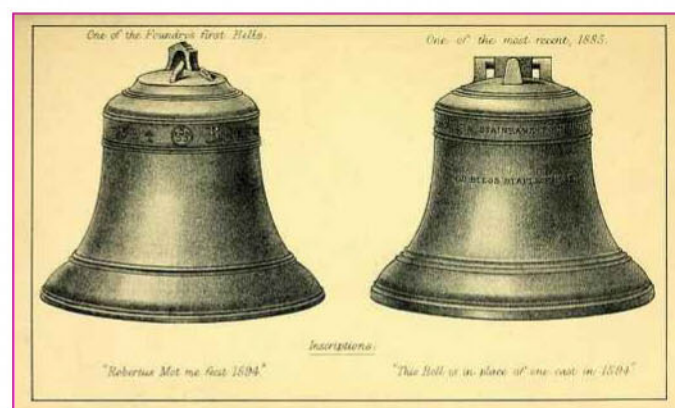
Sometimes, tracking down where a foundry worker was actually employed can be a bit tricky. The best place to begin your search is with the foundries themselves. Many still exist but if you draw a blank, you'll generally find that old maps, town directories, local history books and copies of old newspapers

Visitors watching the Bessemer steel process at John Brown and Co foundry, 1889



“

Many of our ancestors worked as sole traders in small back-street workshops



A page from the Whitechapel Bell catalogue in 1885

## Goodwin's of Stoke

R Goodwin and Sons of Stoke – now known as Goodwin Steel Castings Limited (<http://tinyurl.com/q94cpq3>) – is a good example of the continued diversity of goods produced by foundries. Goodwin's foundry once supplied castings for the local pottery, mining and steel industries. Today, it is still in production, but has moved into the 21st century to make vital components for the nuclear industry.





## Foundry museums

Museums are to be found at many surviving foundries such as the Whitechapel Foundry, John Taylor & Co's bell foundry in Loughborough (<http://tinyurl.com/prvumoa>), the Finch Foundry at Okehampton ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk/finch-foundry/](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/finch-foundry/)), which is the last working water-powered forge in Britain, and the iron and brass foundry section of the National Slate Museum in Wales ([www.museumwales.ac.uk/410/](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/410/)).



If you find an ancestor describing himself as an ironmaster, you can be sure he was a high grade worker

held at public libraries will help you track them down.

What's considered the oldest working foundry in Britain is the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, which, as its name suggests, has been specialising in producing church and handbells since at least 1570. Recent researches have proved an older link to a foundry run by Robert Chamberlain, who was manufacturing bells in 1420. If you think your ancestors may have worked for this particular foundry, you can find biographical details and photographs of some of its early founders at [www.whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk/Past.htm](http://www.whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk/Past.htm). Alternatively, if your ancestor worked in Birmingham or Smethwick, there's some useful information and names on the British History Online website (<http://tinyurl.com/p98gwey>). Meanwhile, in Scotland,



A 19th century advertisement for the Whitechapel Foundry

Glasgow had a number of foundries. The Lion Foundry, for example, made decorative water and drinking fountains. To learn all about Lion and the nearby Walter Macfarlane's Saracen Foundry, go to the Glasgow City history

## Brummie brass

Birmingham was home to workshops making small brass items

Unlike Manchester and other cities where large foundries were common, much of the work in Birmingham often involved making small brass items such as barrel necks, buckles, candlesticks, buttons, snuffboxes and similar small objects, usually in small, dirty workshops. The industry had been a major one in Birmingham since 1740 when workers made swords, gun parts and other larger items in a similar way. Wages were generally paid daily or weekly on a piecework basis, meaning that each worker would be paid for each individual item manufactured, rather than at an hourly rate. Because of this situation, lots of brass workers had multiple bosses and it wasn't uncommon for men to move backwards and forwards between different employers workshops on a daily basis. Employees in small workshops worked flexible shifts, but tended to work long hours so that they could have Sunday and Monday (known as Saint Monday) off.



## Occupations: Foundry workers

► webpage (<http://tinyurl.com/0aa37or>). Another Glasgow manufacturer, the Kinning Park Foundry (<http://tinyurl.com/qcytm2d>), was originally built to manufacture large heavy castings for iron ships built on the Clyde.

### HOTBEDS OF CRIME

You might be surprised to know that, in the 1800s, city foundries were considered hotbeds of crime. Workers were frequently caught stealing metal objects from their employers, and storeyards full of finished goods were magnets for local thieves. Victorian social commentator Henry Mayhew described how ruffians would regularly steal metal objects to sell to the foundries as scrap. The favourite objects were heavy items such as cobblers' lasts and blacksmiths' anvils, though thieves were evidently not fussy. One group of rogues raided a workshop, taking scythes, rasps and files which they hid under their greatcoats before spiriting

them away. Anyone caught stealing in this way could expect to have all their hair shaved off, before serving around two months in gaol, where they would survive on a daily diet of dry bread and gruel, and perhaps the luxury of a bowl of watery soup twice a week.

Sometimes, it was the young boys employed to run errands who were responsible for petty

thieving from foundry store rooms. Mayhew interviewed one former foundry boy who had become a beggar. Though he was not identified by name, Mayhew craftily identified him precisely by describing him as the grandson of the publican who ran the Rose and Crown in Church Lane, opposite Carver Street in London. The lad told Mayhew:

*coming away, I met a companion of mine, and he persuaded me to bolt with the money. I fooled all that money away... I bought linnetts in cages. In fact, I didn't know what use to put the money to. When the money was out I was destitute. I couldn't go back to my employers, and I couldn't face my mother's temper."*

### LIFE AND DEATH

You may find in your research that both a father and his sons worked at the same foundry. This was quite common, despite the dangers of the job. Lads started in the trade as strong and fit workers but

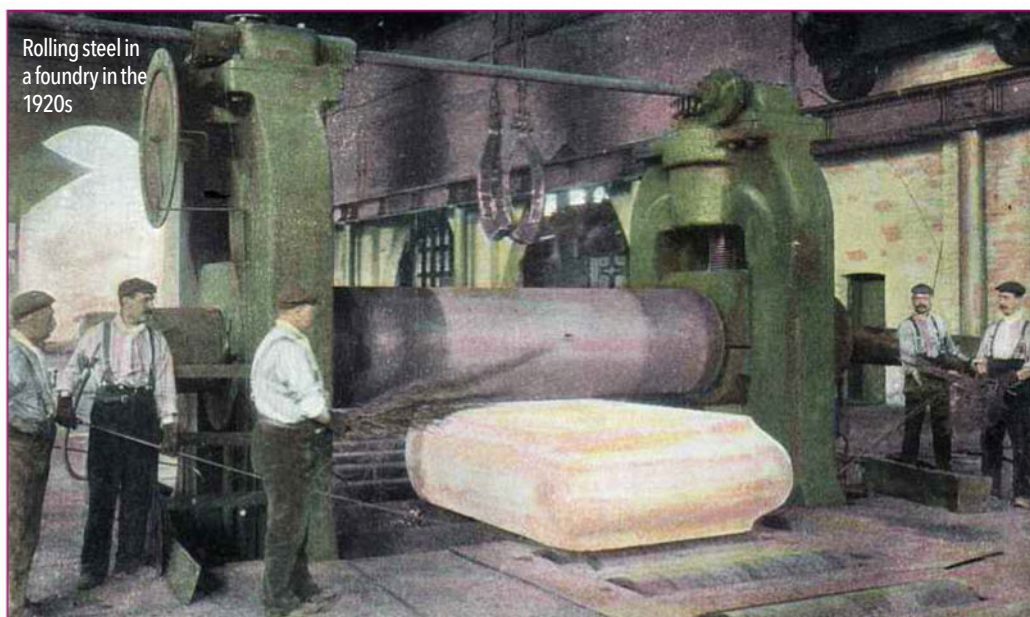
*"My father was a foreman in a foundry. I got a situation in the same foundry after my father cut [died]. Once I was sent to a bank with a cheque for £38 to get cashed, in silver, for wages. In*

## Part of the union

Find your foundry ancestors in trade union records

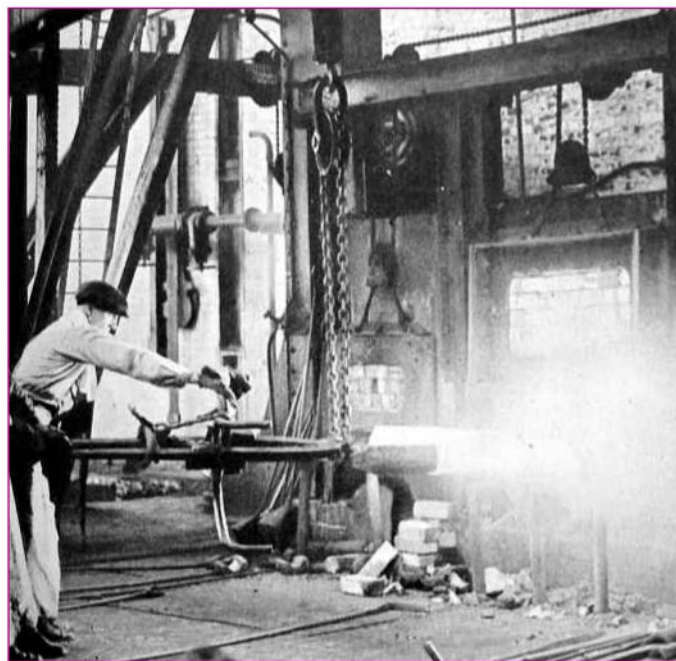


Union membership was common in larger foundries, and strikes were common. In 1919, 50,000 iron foundry workers went on strike for higher wages. If your ancestor was a unionist, you may find reference to him in the National Union of Foundry Workers records (MSS.41/NUFW) at Warwick University's Modern Records Centre. The NUFW was formed in 1920 from an amalgamation of the Friendly Society of Iron Founders, the Amalgamated Society of Coremakers of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Associated Iron Moulders of Scotland. Later, between 1944 and 1946, the Scottish Brassmoulders' Union, the Associated Iron, Steel and Brass Dressers of Scotland, the United Metal Founders' Society and the Ironfounding Workers' Association joined them. It may be worth searching the internet for these earlier unions as the records kept at Warwick are limited to minutes from 1920-1946, banking and account documents 1920-37, miscellaneous correspondence, reports and journals.



Rolling steel in a foundry in the 1920s

Colin Waters Collection

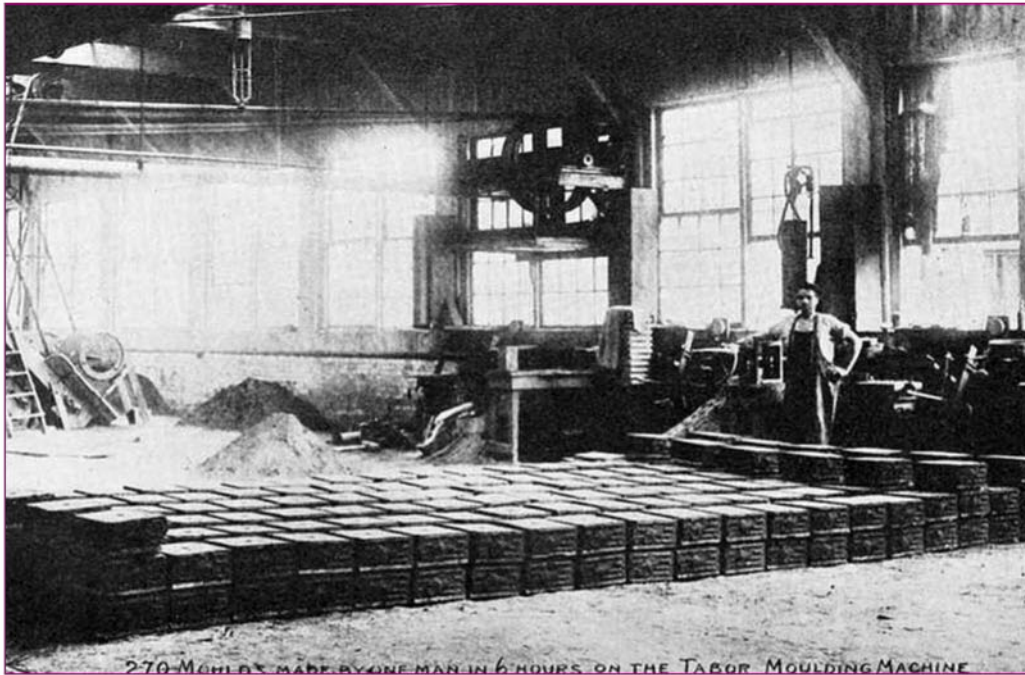


Colin Waters Collection

Life inside a steel foundry was hot and hard, as this 1932 image shows



Colin Waters Collection



270 MOULDERS MADE BY ONE MAN IN 6 HOURS ON THE TABOR MOULDING MACHINE

“

Store-yards full of finished goods were magnets for local thieves

often the inhalation of smoke, exposure to metal dust and chemicals, and the dangers of working with molten metal took its toll. Records describe workers of the day walking home at the end of their shifts “looking as black-faced as sweeps”. These harsh working conditions meant that foundry workers were susceptible to a number of medical conditions

## Infant mortality

A survey conducted at York University concluded that in 1911, amongst married couples between the ages of 15 and 20, unskilled foundry workers and workers in the steel industry showed the highest instances of infant mortality. In the same category were cutlers, shipyard labourers, earthenware manufacturers, and dock and wharf labourers.

that often shortened their lives considerably. Most common were respiratory problems and more serious diseases of the lungs. Asthma, silicosis and various forms of cancer are commonly found on death certificates, often being the main cause of death or as contributory factors.

Death certificates will often give clues as to what

a worker actually did, but be cautious, because many workers exaggerated their job titles in order to boost their status beyond that of common labourer. Though some men will list their occupation as simply ‘foundry worker’, others might be more specific. Perhaps the most common job titles you may come across are iron chargers, who kept the smelting furnace loaded with iron ore; iron dressers, who cleaned off cast metal objects and moulds; weighers, who were responsible for weighing quantities of finished metal into set quantities; moulders, who made and repaired casting moulds; and puddlers, who converted pig-iron into wrought iron. If you find an ancestor describing himself as an ironmaster, you can be sure he was a high grade worker who was either in overall charge of a foundry or actually owned it – unless, of course, he was exaggerating his own employment category for no other reason than sheer vanity! ■

Colin Waters Collection



Old publications are good sources of photographs of individual foundries

Colin Waters Collection



Left: An old postcard commemorating a foundry breaking a moulding record.

Above: Drinking fountains – just one of the many items produced by Victorian foundries

## CONTACTS

### National Archives

Foundry records  
Kew, Richmond,  
Surrey TW9 4DU  
**w.** <http://tinyurl.com/oh52eml>  
**e.** <http://tinyurl.com/3tnyle6>  
**t.** 020 8876 3444

### University of Warwick Modern Records Centre

Union records  
Modern Records Centre,  
University Library, Coventry,  
CV4 7AL  
**w.** <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/>  
**e.** [archives@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:archives@warwick.ac.uk)  
**t.** 024 7652 4219

### Taylor's Bell Foundry and Museum

John Taylor & Co, Freehold  
Street, Loughborough,  
Leicestershire LE11 1AR  
**w.** <http://www.taylorbells.co.uk>  
**e.** [office@taylorbells.co.uk](mailto:office@taylorbells.co.uk)  
**t.** 01509 212241

### Finch Foundry

Sticklepath, Okehampton,  
Devon, EX20 2NW  
**w.** <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/finch-foundry/>  
**e.** [finchfoundry@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:finchfoundry@nationaltrust.org.uk)  
**t.** 01837 840046

### Whitechapel Bell Foundry

32/34 Whitechapel Road,  
London E1 1DY  
**w.** <http://www.whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk>  
**e.** [bells@whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk](mailto:bells@whitechapelbellfoundry.co.uk)  
**t.** 020 7247 2599

## FURTHER READING

Hubert Jim Fyrth, *The Foundry Workers: A Trade Union History* (Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers, 1959).



# Military history: The Battle of Sidi Barrani

**Kev Lochun**

explains how the opening battle in the African theatre of World War 2 proved that a small mechanised force could run rings around infantry



General Archibald Wavell was made a field marshal in 1943, and became Viceroy of India

'Desert rats' of the 7th Armoured Division in a 'fox hole' in north Africa

**S**peaking to war correspondents in December 1940, General Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East, portrayed the British assault on Sidi Barrani in these terms:

*"This is not an offensive and I do not think you ought to describe it as an offensive just yet. You might call it an important raid."*

It was the very morning the fighting began. Though he was cagey about its prospects, the 'raid' became a major coup for the British. Within days this battle, the first of the Desert War, had ended with the complete collapse of the Italian Tenth Army in Egypt.

Mussolini had commanded the incursion into Egypt only two months prior, with one eye firmly on the Suez Canal, the artery that connected Britain to its colonial possessions on the other side of the world. He thought that if he could secure North Africa himself, he could join Hitler at the victors' table as an equal partner, not a sidekick. So determined was he to go it alone (and perhaps desperate, lest he be robbed of the glory), he turned down the Führer's offer of 250 Panzer tanks to help his invasion.

His generals, however, did not share his optimism. The Italians were ill prepared and ill equipped, unmechanised and lacking even enough

water. So when they finally rolled over the border from Libya, two months after Il Duce had declared war on the British, they only made it as far as the fishing village of Sidi Barrani. Here they dug in, establishing a ring of camps surrounding the town that stretched 50 miles into the desert – though, crucially, these camps were so far apart that they could not support one another.

## THE EBNA GAP

When it became clear that the Italians were not going to push forward immediately, plans for a British counteroffensive began to coalesce. There was a tempting, 15-mile stretch of



Peter Newark's Pictures





“The sand got into clothes and mess tins, eyes and ears

General Archibald Wavell's north African offensive in late 1940 and early 1941

no-man's land amid the camp network, dubbed the Ebna Gap, and it was here the British planned to strike.

The raid, officially called Operation Compass, began on the night of 7 December, though from the Italian perspective, nothing out of ordinary happened. They noticed heavier RAF bombing, but thought little of it, unaware that the noise masked that of engines humming to the south as the British 7th Armoured Division and 4th Indian Brigade (which despite its name included a number of British battalions) made their way across open desert via a rendezvous point codenamed 'Piccadilly Circus'.

The approach, though unnoticed, was far from easy. While sand doesn't define a desert (annual rainfall does), it was certainly the prevailing concern of the Tommies in North Africa. It got into clothes and mess tins, eyes and ears. Within lurked spiders and scorpions, as well as booby traps and tripwires placed by the Italians. And that was when the weather was good. Every so often a sandstorm would roll along, forcing the men to take cover under their groundsheet as best they could.

**DAILY MIRROR, Friday, Dec. 12, 1940**

**20,000 More Prisoners Captured in Sidi Barrani**

**VICTORY**

**NAZIS GUN CAST SHOPS**

SKIMMING rooftops, two Messerschmitt 109 fighters machine-gunned shopping centres in a town on the South-East Coast yesterday.

Each raider fired six bursts but no one was injured, and the only damage was a few broken windows and shattered plates.

The planes passed over the police station and the old Town Hall. Spent bullets were found in a gutter outside both buildings.

After flying at less than 200ft. for nearly three miles, the raiders were forced into the clouds by machine-gun fire from cliff posts. They did not return.

**Bombs in London**

At least four enemy planes were shot down during the day.

Flying at a tremendous height, raiders dropped bombs in two London districts.

A small bomb fell harmlessly in a field.

It was dropped by a lone raider which was met by Hurricanes. It fell back into the clouds.

Two raiding formations trying to reach London by way of the Thames Estuary were turned back.

Thames-side A.A. batteries first opened fire. Then R.A.F. fighters tore into the enemy.

A game of hide-and-seek between an enemy fighter-bomber and British fighters was watched by people at a north-east coast town.

**'ALWAYS ENGLAND'—QUEEN MARY**

THERE will be no Christmas cards for the men in the Services from the King and Queen this year.

Reasons for the decision are the need for national economy in the use of paper, and the great burden the delivery of the cards would place on the Post Office.

Last year the King and Queen sent cards to all members of the Army and Royal Air Force serving in France and to members of the Royal and Dominion Navies.

By deciding not to send cards, the King and Queen are following the precedent set by King George V and Queen Mary in the second year of the Great War. Greetings were sent at Christmas, 1914, but not afterwards.

Greetings sent by the King and Queen this year are likely to be confined to members of the Royal Family and personal friends.

Queen Mary's card bears a reproduction of a beautiful old English cottage with the title, "There will always be an England."

**THE THREE TRUMPS**

Notillas and battle-cruisers in the Mediterranean.

**ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW BROWN CUNNINGHAM**, Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. Wiry and alert at fifty-seven. His dash and vision gained him command of destroyer Scorpion in last war. Brought to Whitehall as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff after being in charge of destroyer.

**NO LEGAL BAR TO CASH AID**

—U.S. Banker

"It would appear that there is nothing in the law to prevent the U.S. Government from giving credit to Britain or making an outright grant-in-aid."

Mr. Winthrop W. Aldrich, chairman of the Chase National Bank, made this statement in a speech at Boston yesterday.

Neither the Johnson Act nor the Neutrality Act, I can reliably inform, prohibits our Government from giving direct financial aid to Great Britain, though both interpose barriers against private citizens or corporations giving credit," he added.

"Both political parties have declared it to be the American national purpose to give every aid to Great Britain short of war. If that pledge means anything it means that our full industrial and financial strength shall be thrown into the scales on the side of England."

**Congress Consent**

Mr. Morgenthau, Secretary to the U.S. Treasury, declared yesterday that the Treasury would consider lending money to Britain only if Congress consent had been obtained.

"Irrespective of any interpretations lawyers might give of the Treasury's powers to lend money without specific Congress consent, I certainly would not be a party to any loan to Britain or any other country coming under the Johnson Act without the direction of Congress," Exchange and Associated Press.

**Eden's Thanks**

Mr. Eden, War Minister, sent this telegram to General Wavell, Commander-in-Chief Middle East:

"On behalf of all ranks of the Army serving at home and in other theatres, we send to you and all other your command our congratulations on your victory."

"Your brilliant stroke has delighted us all and filled us with pride."

It was stated in London yesterday that the three Italian Generals captured in Egypt are General Sebastiano Gallina, a corps commander, General Amando Pescatore, a divisional commander, and General Mezzanotte, also a divisional commander.

"Notable" Italian losses in "Gorge fighting west of Sidi Barrani" were admitted by yesterday's Rome war communiqué, says Associated Press, but Italians were not directly told that British forces had recaptured Graziani's advanced Egyptian base.

"A victory of the first order," says Mr. Churchill. See back page.

**Evans Williams Shampoo...contains elements upon which hair thrives. Its regular use will retain all those qualities which make your hair so delightfully charming & attractive**

**EVANS WILLIAMS Shampoo**

Keeps the hair young

The Daily Mirror celebrates victory at Sidi Barrani in December 1940



## Military history: The Battle of Sidi Barrani

Italian prisoners captured at Sidi Barrani are marched into captivity



Imperial War Museums



The Italians put up the staunchest resistance, with guns blazing and grenades flying

► “It was as if someone had reached up and switched off the sun because it suddenly got dark,” recalled Tom Barker of the 1st Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, part of 16th British Infantry Brigade. “It was as if the gates of hell could no longer contain the fury of Satan and had burst asunder.” Hot

sand would soon settle on the sheltering men, at which point they would have to move, ever so slightly. It was either that, Parker adds, or be cooked by where they lay.

The battle proper began in the early hours of the 9th, when the 4th Battalion 7th Rajput Regiment opened fire on the Nibeiwa camp. But they were just a diversion, a lure to draw attention while the Matildas of 7th Royal Tank Regiment whipped around to the northwest, where the British had identified a gap in the minefield surrounding it. At around 7am, the Matilda tanks burst through the perimeter followed by the 11th Indian Infantry Brigade (among them the 2nd Battalion Cameron Highlanders). It was here that the Italians are said

to have put up the staunchest resistance, with guns blazing and grenades flying, but in the end they were no match for superior armour of the Matildas. By 10.40am the camp had been secured, and over 4000 prisoners taken.

### ALARM RAISED

Next came the twin camps at Tummar. The 7th Royal Tank Regiment raced off to Tummar West, a sandstorm forcing them to make the assault on compass bearing. This time they were followed in by the 5th Indian Brigade, among them the 1st Battalion Royal Fusiliers, whose Kiwi drivers abandoned their trucks to join the charge. The Italians who escaped the carnage raised the alarm at Tummar East, whose garrison abandoned

A battered Matilda II tank in north Africa



# From a royal wedding to the Far East

Find out more about the action seen by the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's) were formed in the wake of the 1881 Childers Reforms from the 91st Argyllshire and 93rd Sutherland Regiments of Foot, which respectively became its 1st and 2nd Battalions. The 93rd were the 'Thin Red Line' that mythically turned back a Russian cavalry charge in the battle of Balaklava in October 1854, while the incorporation of Princess Louise's name - Louise being the fourth daughter of Queen Victoria - stems from the 91st, who formed the honour guard to her wedding to the future Duke of Argyll in 1871.

Sidi Barrani was the first action for the 1st Battalion during World War 2. They fought in the desert again at El Alamein, and were subsequently posted to Crete, Sicily and Italy. The 2nd Battalion, based in Malaya, suffered heavy losses fighting a rearguard action during the British retreat to Singapore; the majority of the men in this unit became PoWs when the city fell to the Japanese on 15 February 1942, and in the aftermath the regiment's 15th Battalion was redesignated as the 2nd. The regiment has been

amalgamated further in recent years, and is represented today as Balaklava Company, 5th Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Regimental Museum ([www.argylls.co.uk](http://www.argylls.co.uk)) is located within Stirling Castle in the King's Old Building, built as a residence for James IV. Here you can find memorabilia stretching back two centuries, including medals, paintings, uniforms, documents and personal items of men who served with the regiment. Research enquiries can only be made using an online form via [www.argylls.co.uk/research](http://www.argylls.co.uk/research).



their defences and attempted a counterattack in the open. By late afternoon, both camps were all but taken. With 7th Armoured Brigade having already advanced to blockade the road from Sidi Barrani back to Libya, the Italians on the coast were penned in with nowhere to go.

The push on Sidi Barrani came the next morning, a task that fell to the 16th British Infantry Brigade. They had crept forward in the night, but as dawn broke they came under artillery fire, throwing up a fog of cloud and dust that clogged the men's rifles. As the shells rained down around them, the call came to fix bayonets. At the fore were the 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, followed by the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and 1st Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment.

"It was not a bayonet charge like in the First World War where everyone went over the top yelling and screaming and getting mown down," writes Parker. "This was more

sedate in that we stupidly walked forward for half a mile like the metal ducks at the fairground while the Italians in the cover of dugouts in the sand potted at us when they felt like it." But the brigade pressed the attack with the support of the Royal Tank Regiment and other units of the 4th Indian Division, and by nightfall Sidi Barrani was back in British hands.

By now the prisoner count was up to 200,000. Many of the Italians had simply not put up a fight at all, opting

to surrender rather than die as the British closed in. The rout was to become even more complete, as 'Selby Force' mopped up the area around Maktila and the 7th Armoured Division engaged the fleeing Italians around Buq Buq and the remaining camps. The consensus is that by 12 December, Operation Compass had resulted in 38,000 prisoners - "20 acres of officers and 100 acres of men", in the words of an undisclosed British tank officer - as well as 237 guns and 73 tanks. As



A fog of cloud and dust clogged the men's rifles

far as raids go, it was a pretty good one.

But it was not the end of Compass. It would continue over Christmas and into the new year, culminating in the surrender of the entire Italian Tenth Army at Beda Fomm in Libya on 7 February 1941, when Wavell would receive the cable, "fox killed in the open". A week later another fox would appear in region, this one being an altogether more dangerous opponent who would turn British fortunes for a time - the head of Germany's newly established Afrika Korps, Erwin Rommel. ■



Maheer A. Al-Musallam



Kev Lochun is a writer and editor specialising in science and history



# Going further: Electoral Registers

More electoral registers have recently been put online. We look at what they can tell you about your ancestors and where they lived



The House of Commons by Sir George Hayter – it depicts the first session of the newly reformed House of Commons on 5 February 1833, with the Whigs on the left and the Tories on the right

**B**ritish Library-held electoral registers from the period 1832 to 1932 were recently released by Findmypast. The number of records in the collection is over 260,000, a huge number, and adds to the poll books and registers already online with Ancestry and TheGenealogist. What can these records tell us, and how do they help the family historian? This month, we take a look at the registers.

Electoral registers were first produced in 1832, after the Representation of the People Act was passed. This act, known as the Great Reform Act, gave the vote to all men who occupied a property with an annual value of £10; prior

to it being passed, voting was restricted to freemen and freeholders. It had been Henry VI who had established, back in the 15th century, that men had to own property worth at least 40 shillings in order to be able to vote in their county; although some changes to the system had occurred over the following centuries, it was the 1832 act – better known as the Reform Act – that really started to change things. This act extended the franchise to the extent that, after it came into effect, one man in seven could vote, and so lists were drawn up of the people entitled to vote at elections in a specific polling district. Those who were not on the register were not allowed to

vote, and nobody could vote in a place where they were not registered.

In 1867, the Representation of the People Act extended the vote for all male householders living in towns, and this included those lodging in houses where they paid more than £10 a year in rent. This tended to include more men in the larger industrial centres, so the number of voters increased in those centres, and decreased in

smaller towns. However, this act doubled the number of those eligible to vote in England and Wales. Further acts throughout the late 19th and early 20th century gradually increased the franchise further. Voting before 1918 had largely been a male preserve. Only men were allowed to vote in parliamentary elections between 1832 and 1918, although women had been allowed to vote in local

## Boundary commission maps

Boundary revisions of constituencies have taken place several times, carried out by a Boundary Commission, which publishes maps of the new boundaries. If you need to locate the constituency in which your ancestor lived, find their location in a street atlas, and then compare it with the Boundary Commission map.

# Document dissected: Bridgwater electoral register, 1860

What information can you find out from an electoral register?

## POLLING DISTRICT

This extract is from the 1860 electoral roll for the parish of Bridgwater, which, as this page shows, came under the Bridgwater Polling District. This district formed part of the Somerset, Western Division, constituency.

## FULL NAMES

The electoral roll uses individuals' full names, which can be useful if you didn't know your ancestor had a middle name – it should be recorded here. Those recorded here include 52-year-old Reuben Craven Payne, who was a chemist and druggist based in Cornhill, Bridgwater.

BRIDGWATER POLLING DISTRICT. PARISH OF BRIDGWATER, continued.					
Marginal for Overseas/Objections.	Number.	Christian Name and Surname of each Voter at full length.	Place of Abode.	Nature of Qualification.	Residence, or other like place in this Parish (or Township), and nature of lease (if any) where the Property is situate, or name of the Property, if lease by way or name of the occupying Tenant; or if the qualification consist of a Rent-charge, then the name of the owner of the Property out of which such Rent is issuing, or name of them, and the situation of the Property.
	264	Michel, James	Sturminster Newton, Dorset	freehold lands	William Bulpin
	265	Murch, Edward	Bridgwater...	freehold houses and garden, and leasehold houses and premises	late Down's Eastover and Crow-pill
	266	May, Frederick	Taunton	freehold lands	Bradley meads
	267	Mogg, Cary Bailey	Bridgwater...	freehold houses	Eastover, Robert Popper and another
	268	May, William	No. 2, Portland terrace, New Kent road, St. George the Martyr, Southwark	freehold lands and freehold house	East Bower, and Fryern street the 12 acres
	269	Manchip, Thomas	Bridgwater...	two freehold cottages	Back street
	270	Martin, Thomas	Salmon Parade, Bridgwater	freehold chief rents or ground rents	issuing out of houses belonging to Miss Kett, Messrs. Bowditch and Williams, and others situate in Bridgwater
	271	Newton, Thomas	Taunton St. James	freehold house	Fryern street, No. 4
	272	Poole, Thomas James	25, Grosvenor place, Walcot, Bath	freehold house	Fore street, Bridgwater, occupied by Mr. Samuel West
	273	Pain, Thomas	Bristol	two freehold houses	West street
	274	Poole, William	Bridgwater...	freehold house	High street, called the Old Oak
	275	Parker, George	Mill street, Bridgwater	freehold gardens	Mill street
	276	Parsley, Richard	Weston-super-Mare	freehold dwelling house	Fore street
	277	Prior, John	Bridgwater...	leasehold dwelling houses	Eastover and Northgate
	278	Payne, Reuben Craven	Bridgwater...	freehold dwelling house	Cornhill
	279	Powell, Thomas	Montpelier Bristol	freehold house and garden	leading out of Ropers lane
	280	Prew, Joseph	Bridgwater...	freehold houses	West street
	281	Plewman, Thomas	Bridgwater...	freehold house	Silver Street, Jane Kidner
	282	Poole, Gabriel Stone	Bridgwater...	freehold cottages and gardens	behind Friar's Place late Bowen's
	283	Preece, William	Bridgwater...	freehold house	Saint John street, John Marks
	284	Poole, Joseph Ruscombe	Cannington	undivided moiety of a freehold house and land	late Bowen's
	285	Priest, Samuel	7, Love lane, Wood-street, London	lease for years of houses and gardens	on the Mount
	286	Peacock, Joseph	Bridgwater...	leasehold house and premises	Saint John street, James Dawkins
	287	Popham, Lewis	Bridgwater...	leasehold cottages	Andrew Hapson, John Hobbs
	288	Poole, Thomas James	The Lodge, Tiverton, Devon	freehold house	James Bond, Edward Crookford
	289	Potter, John	Chedzoy	land	Union street
	290	Ritson, Cuthbert	Pen Lea House	freehold house and land	Fore street, occupied by Mr. Samuel West
	291	Rookley, William	Bridgwater...	leasehold houses	Bradley Meads, Bridgwater
	292	Rainey, William, Junr.	East Bower, Bridgwater	house and farm as occupier	Pen Lea House, Hamp, Somerset
	293	Rainey, John Jeanes	73, Southgate street, Bath	freehold house and lands	Yard, Dauxton
	294	Rainey, William	Bridgwater...	lands as occupier	Ropers lane new Albert street
	295	Ricks, James	Bridgwater...	freehold house and garden	East Bower
	296	Ralls, George	Bridgwater...	lands as occupier	Bowle's, Popham's, and Annesley's
	297	Ralls, William	Bridgwater...	lands as occupier	late Symen's
	298	Rick, John Henry	Bridgwater...	lease for years of houses	late Cogle's, and part of Horsey farm
					Bradley mead
					William Hill, Thomas Brubbin

## HOME ADDRESS

You can ascertain your ancestor's usual home from the electoral roll, which is useful as sometimes the place that qualified them to vote was not their usual address. For example, here, John Jeanes Rainey lived at 73 Southgate Street in Bath, but qualified to vote in Bridgwater based on his property at East Bower.

## QUALIFICATION

In 1860, men gained eligibility to vote based on various qualifications. Here, the nature of their qualification to vote is given; many have freehold houses or land, but others have a long lease on property, or occupy land.

## PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

One of the interesting things about electoral rolls is the fact that they can provide some history to locations or property ownership. Here, it is stated that Albert Street used to be known as Ropers Lane; Thomas Martin has 'freehold chief rents or ground rents... issuing out of houses belonging to Miss Kett' and others.

elections since 1869, and in county or borough elections since 1888. In Scotland, unmarried women and wives who were not living with their husband, and who were owners or tenants, could vote for burgh councillors from 1882, although men and women over 21 only gained the parliamentary vote in 1930. In 1928, both men and women over the age of 21 in England and Wales could vote in national elections, and the voting was only reduced to 18 in 1969.

## POLLING AND CONSTITUENCIES

Polling districts are areas within a local authority, and are combined to form a larger parliamentary constituency. Voters listed in the electoral register can vote for parish councillors, district councillors, county councillors and MPs today, even if the units they represent are different. Parliamentary constituencies have changed over time; the 1832 Reform Act reduced the

number of constituencies by getting rid of the 'rotten boroughs'. It also divided some counties into divisions. In 1885, the Redistribution of Seats Act attempted to make the population of constituencies more equal by splitting some and reducing others. For example, Bedfordshire was split into two constituencies in 1885 – Biggleswade and Luton – and the former county constituency of Buckinghamshire was split into the Aylesbury,

Buckingham and Wycombe constituencies. Therefore, the constituency your ancestor was listed under in the 1870s may be different to the one he was listed under in the 1880s. Today, there are a total of 650 parliamentary constituencies – 533 in England, with 59 in Scotland, 40 in Wales and 18 in Northern Ireland. The parliament website has a useful section where you can look at the changes in constituencies over time; this includes election results (<http://tinyurl.com/nrjtg9e>).



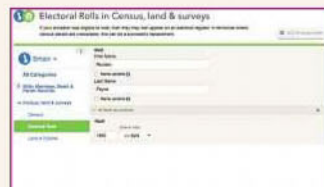
# Step-by-step: Search Findmypast's electoral registers

Search the new release of records on Findmypast, to find your voting ancestors



## ELECTORAL ROLL SEARCH

**1** The search page for electoral registers on Findmypast is at <http://tinyurl.com/osrxm4>. This enables you to search a person, year, constituency, polling district or place, county, country, or by keyword. Alternatively, use the main search page, then look under Censuses, Land and Surveys, and an option will come up for Electoral Rolls.



## RESTRICT THE DATE RANGE

**2** Because the site has documents relating to a wide period of time, it may be worth restricting your search. Here, we are just searching for an individual in 1865, and have further restricted the terms to an exact spelling of the name. You can also search under location, either entering a place, or just searching a county, or by keyword.



## SEARCH RESULTS

**3** Here, we have one main result for Reuben Payne – the 1865 Somerset electoral register. Limiting your search gives just a couple of results – to get more, widen your terms or look for variants of spelling. We've found that playing with the search terms resulted in more records being found. Also watch out for gaps in the records – check what the online records include and exclude.



## ORIGINAL LOCATION

**4** Clicking on a result takes you to more information. Here, you can find out where the information has originally come from, and what electoral division Reuben Payne came under – this image shows that he came under the West Somerset electoral division, which existed between 1832 and 1885.

# Absent voters

In WW1, those on active service were recorded separately

A separate electoral register was compiled each year between 1918 and 1921, recording soldiers and sailors who were on active service during World War 1. A parliamentary act passed in February 1918 had let servicemen register and obtain a vote in the 1918 General Election despite serving away from home. This is known as the list of absent voters. Ancestry has some information from absent voters lists, including Birmingham records from 1918, which record rank, service number, regiment and address.

There is a useful site listing where to find English absent voters at <http://armyancestry.blogspot.co.uk/p/absent-voters.html>. However, the National Library of Scotland says that very few absent voters' rolls have survived; those that do tend to be in local archives, libraries, or at the British Library. The NLS does not hold any copies.



## WARTIME IMPACT

Although registers have tended to have been issued every year since 1832, there have been some exceptions. War, in particular, has had an impact. No registers were compiled in 1916 and 1917 in England and Wales (1915 to 1917 in Scotland) and between 1940 and 1944. In addition, in 1868, 1885, between 1919 and 1926, and in 1945 and 1946, two registers were produced each year. In the 1940s, this was because of the general election of May 1945, and the need to produce an additional register listing service voters in March 1946.

Findmypast's release relates to English and Welsh registers, so it is not

comprehensive; as with many family history resources, you may need to use more than one site to find your ancestors' records – both Ancestry and TheGenealogist hold records, or, if you're able to get there, try the British Library. It holds a complete set of electoral registers for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland for 1937, 1938, and from and including 1947. Prior to this, its registers are a bit more patchy. It only has records of a few Scottish constituencies for 1932-1936 and 1939 – and nothing else – and only a few records for 1945 and 1946. For the period 1832 to 1931, it holds around 20,000 registers, the majority of which were produced between 1885 and 1915. To find out exactly what it

## Working class vote

In 1867, the Representation of the People Act enabled working class men to vote – lodgers who paid more than £10 a year in rent could vote, as could men in rural areas who had small landholdings. The act doubled the electorate to one million, and now, nearly one-third of all adult males in England and Wales could vote.

MIDDLESEX PARISH: DISTRICT		
LIST OF REGISTERED VOTERS		
No.	Name	Qualification
1	Mr. John Smith	Householder
2	Mr. James Brown	Householder
3	Mr. Robert White	Householder
4	Mr. Thomas Green	Householder
5	Mr. William Black	Householder
6	Mr. Henry Gold	Householder
7	Mr. Charles Silver	Householder
8	Mr. George Wood	Householder
9	Mr. Edward Stone	Householder
10	Mr. Richard Clay	Householder

## LOOK AT THE REGISTER

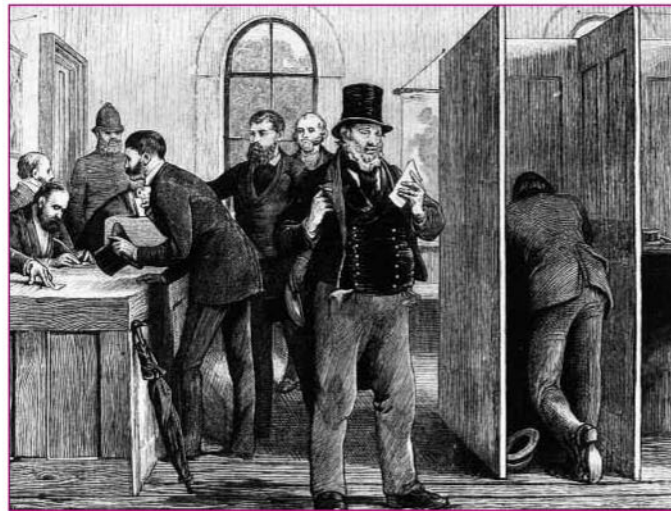
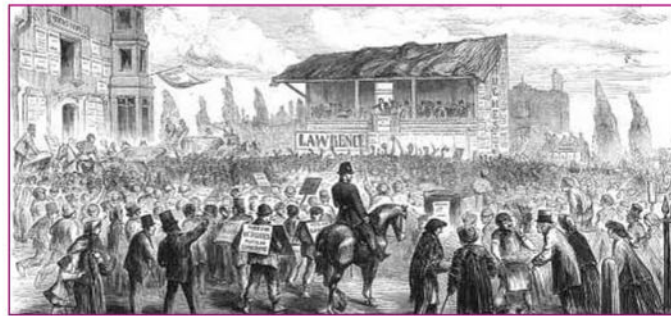
5 Scrolling down the results page, you will find the scanned image of the relevant electoral register page. This shows the details of the parish and polling district – and also of the individual, their home, nature of voting qualification, and location of the property that enabled them to get the vote.

holds for this period, you can consult a free ebook on the British Library website at <http://tinyurl.com/cb8davj>.

The National Library of Scotland ([www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)) holds almost all Scottish electoral registers from 1946 onwards, and the National Archives of Scotland ([www.nas.gov.uk](http://www.nas.gov.uk)) also holds some 19th century electoral registers, or voters' rolls. For Glasgow records, the Mitchell Library's family history site has a useful guide as to where voters' rolls can be found (<http://tinyurl.com/naoodvc>).

## WHAT'S INCLUDED?

The detail available on these registers varies according to the year. All records up to 1948 stated the nature of an individual's qualification to vote. However, between 1869 and 1928, the names of female ratepayers who had a municipal vote or whose husband's profession gave them the vote were being included. In addition, the records for 1885-1915 are



## Rural voters

The 1884 Franchise Act made those living in urban and rural areas more equal than they had previously. All male house owners and lodgers who paid at least £10 a year, regardless of whether they lived in towns or the countryside, could vote, extending the franchise further across the male working class population.

Elections were depicted in art throughout the 19th century – here we can see election hustings (top) and voting in a polling booth (bottom)

perhaps the most interesting, as they include the landlord's name, the weekly rent paid by a voter, and the number of rooms rented out to people qualified to vote under the 'lodger's franchise'. Scottish voters' rolls contain a similar amount of information to English and Welsh electoral registers, detailing first and last name, place of abode, and, until 1918, the occupation, nature of voting qualification, and address where the property the qualification is based on is located.

## WHO COMPILED THE REGISTERS?

Up to the end of World War 1, parish overseers were responsible for compiling electoral registers. This was initially done alphabetically by name, and by parish. In 1878, registers started to be compiled by street – they were mainly lists of ratepayers, and as rates were collected door-to-door, the overseers would compile their lists as they went. Since the end of World War 1, registers have

been compiled by street, in alphabetical order. It is not possible, with the hard copies of registers, to trace individuals without knowledge of an address or locale, as there are no alphabetical indexes of voters, and so the digitisation of older registers, with name searches possible, is invaluable to the family historian. ■

## CONTACTS

### British Library

Electoral registers guide  
[w. http://tinyurl.com/lcwzbj](http://tinyurl.com/lcwzbj)

### The National Archives

Electoral registration guide  
[w. http://tinyurl.com/onwdk7z](http://tinyurl.com/onwdk7z)

## FURTHER READING

Richard H. A. Cheffins, **Parliamentary Constituencies and their Registers since 1832** (British Library, 1998, ISBN 071230844X), available to download from <http://tinyurl.com/cb8davj>

Harold Smith, **The British Women's Suffrage Campaign, 1866-1928** (Longman, 1998, ISBN 978-0582298118)

Michael Gordon, **Parliamentary Sovereignty in the UK Constitution: Process, Politics and Democracy** (Hart Publishing, 2015, ISBN 978-1849464659)



Canvassing for Votes, part of William Hogarth's Humours of an Election series, depicts the political corruption endemic in earlier election campaigns



An engraving based on *Committed for Trial*, by Frank Holl, 1878, showing a family visiting a prisoner in Newgate. Holl had been commissioned by William Luson Thomas, social reformer and founder of *The Graphic*, and the original oil painting was produced in situ at Newgate







SOCIAL HISTORY:

# BEHIND BARS

*Lucy Williams explores the daily grind of life in Victorian England's notorious convict prisons*

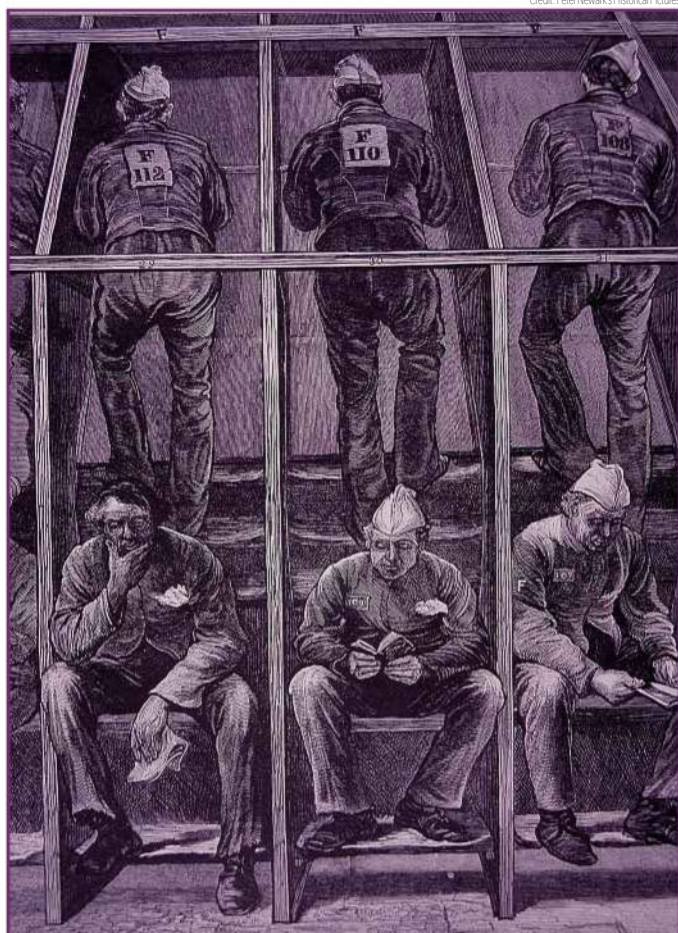
**V**ictorian England's convict prisons, home to some of the most serious offenders of the day, have been immortalised in literature, and on stage and screen. Their names – Brixton, Pentonville, Millbank, or Dartmoor – are well known, as are their reputations as institutions of hopelessness and despair. We might know the stories of some of the more famous men and women that spent time in convict prisons but details of daily life inside prison walls are a little harder to come by. For our ancestors who served time as Victorian convicts, prison life could be hard, lonely, and unrelenting.

From the 1840s onwards, institutions such as Millbank and Brixton (formerly the Surrey House of Correction) were repurposed, and new institutions made for a new kind

of imprisonment. This was known as 'penal servitude', and it replaced older systems of punishment, like convict transportation and corporal and capital punishment. Some of the newest buildings, like Portland Prison, were constructed speedily to house convicts and were therefore made of little more than corrugated iron, wood, and stone. Not only were they uncomfortable and poorly provisioned, but they also provided no shelter from the winter's cold. Many convicts found this more unbearable than the loss of their liberty. In these basic buildings, with Spartan provisions, habitual and serious offenders could find themselves confined from anywhere between three years to life – the most common length of sentences being either five or seven years.

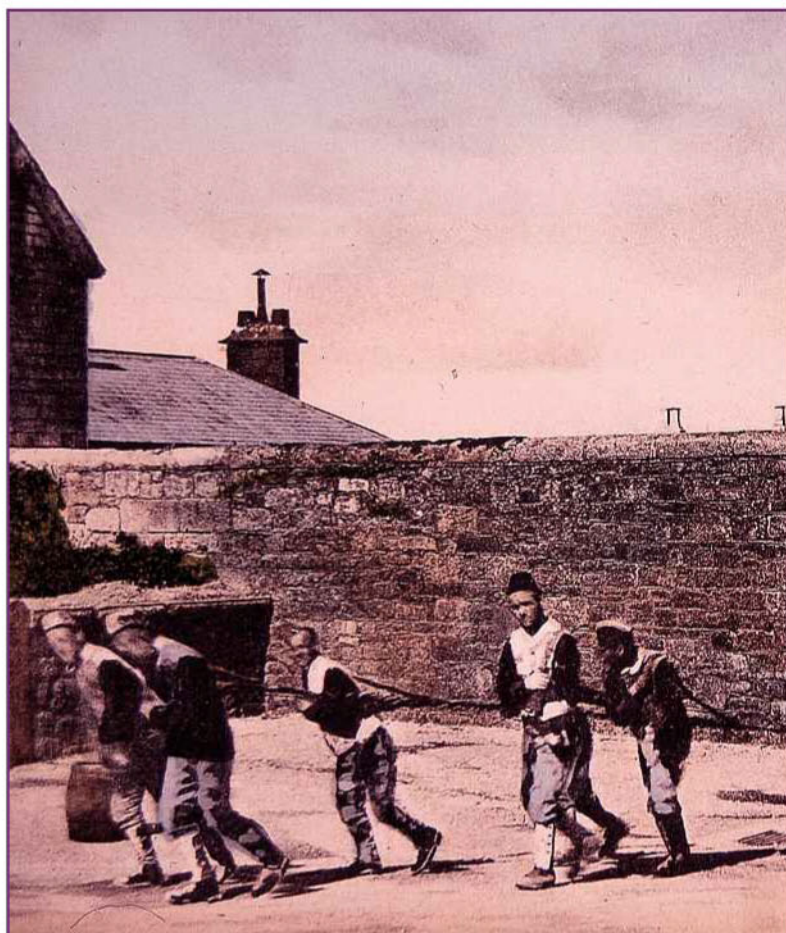


Credit: Peter Newark's Historical Pictures



Above left: The treadmill at Clerkenwell prison, 1874

Above right: Shackled prisoners walking through Dartmoor Prison gate, c1890



## Diet

Prison food was strictly regimented. Prisoners were served three meals a day, planned down to the ounce. In general, breakfast consisted of gruel or cocoa. Lunch was a meal of 'black' bread or potatoes with broth or soup (twice a week with meat), then gruel, cocoa, or soup, and bread for supper.

## PRISON PROPERTY

After sentencing, our ancestors began the short and shocking process of becoming convicts. Firstly, they had to surrender all personal belongings, even down to their brushes and handkerchiefs, as they were processed into their new surroundings. Nothing contaminated by an inmate's previous life of crime was allowed into the prison, and all property was catalogued and stored for when its owner was released. However, many prisoners complained that not all their property was returned to them when they left. In the interest of health and hygiene, prisoners were washed in the prison baths; men had their heads, beards and whiskers shaved off, and women had their hair cut short. All prisoners went through a physical and medical inspection to ensure that the sick were segregated from the healthy.

Next came the prison uniform. Convicts were famed for wearing the black 'broad arrow' that instantly identified them as crown property. Men would be placed in trousers and jackets, women in dresses and undergarments of wool and flannel, and a cap. Uniforms were designed to be simple, homogenous and practical rather than comfortable. Whilst the prisoner was responsible for keeping their uniform clean and presentable it was still government property. Any damage done to the uniform resulted in punishment.

## SEPARATE AND SILENT SYSTEMS

Once processed into the prison, inmates would begin their sentence, starting with a period of probation. This time would be spent in the 'separate system' and in 'silent association'. Unlike other imprisonment, penal servitude was not only intended to be punitive. A key principle of the regime was that it would also provide a chance for reform. Years of penal servitude would separate an offender from their former life of crime, and give them the opportunity to contemplate the error of their ways. Time in convict prison would teach them industrious habits through long hours of hard work. For the process to achieve the full affect, prisoners spent months of their life in almost total isolation, and much of their time in silence. Work was hard and repetitive, and routine was unending.

The separate system was the first that many convicts experienced on their entry to prison. Prisoners would be required to spend the majority of their time alone in their cells, and even in communal spaces like church. Wherever possible, inmates were prevented from even seeing other prisoners. The purpose of this system was to ensure that prisoners had nothing but their own thoughts for company, leading them to question the paths that had led them to crime. In 1854, Dr Daniel Ritchie, musing on the psychological effect that isolation had on convicts, noted that in the cell,



Credit: Peter Newark's Historical Pictures



"alone with God and a wounded conscience, the unhappy man was forced to exercise his powers of reflection, and thus acquires command over his sensual impulses which will probably exert a permanent influence".

The second system prisoners might be subjected to was silent association. Prisoners could physically be bought together, but they were forbidden to talk or communicate in any way. One of the more notable, although shortlived, ways that prison authorities tried to ensure that male prisoners did not communicate was by the use of the 'mask' – a cloth hood and veil which obscured an offender's face. The hope was that with their faces hidden, convicts would be unable to recognise anyone well enough to communicate. The system was soon replaced as it became apparent that individuals were able to recognise the build, voice, and other distinguishing features of those they knew or wished to connect with.

Although formally denied the opportunity to commune or talk together, those in either solitary confinement or the silent system did find ways of making themselves known to those around them. By knocking on cells next to them, muttering through gaps in the walls, or scratching messages for others to see, prisoners found a range of ingenious ways to remind themselves, and others, that they were not alone. The draining psychological impact ►

## 'MY 15 LOST YEARS'

*After the death of her husband James, Florence Maybrick spent 15 years in convict prison for his murder*



The story of Florence Maybrick's supposed poisoning of her husband James in 1889 is well known. Her trial was an international sensation, and historians have pored over the details of the case trying to ascertain her guilt or innocence. Less famous are the details of what happened to Florence after she was convicted, as she largely disappeared from the public eye. Florence spent 15 years in prison before she was paroled in 1904. After her release, Florence published a memoir of her time in prison, and her book is one of the most detailed accounts ever left by a Victorian prisoner.

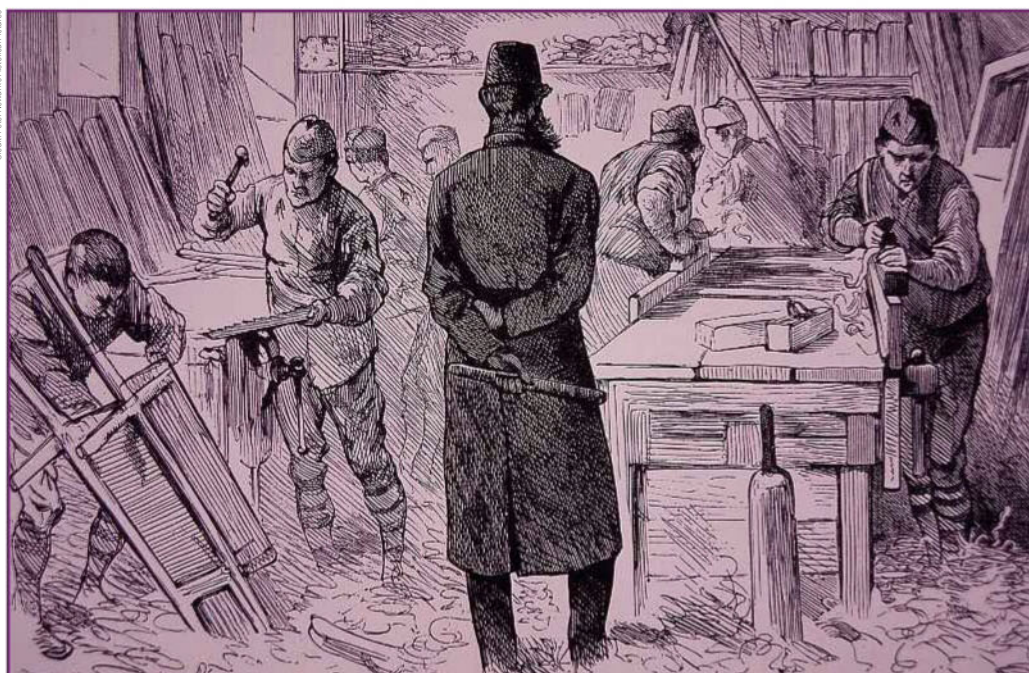
After her trial Florence found herself in what she called the grasp of a "horrible nightmare". She was taken first to Woking prison in London where she was processed, her hair cut short and placed into the standard prison uniform. She would wear nothing else until her release.

She spent the first nine months of her sentence in solitary confinement, where she spent days alone in a 7x4 foot cell, and was not permitted to leave unless for chapel or exercise. For 22 hours each day, Florence sat alone stitching shirts or reading. When outside her cell, she was not allowed to speak to other inmates. Florence was deeply affected by her time in the separate system which she claimed was "the most cruel feature of English penal servitude". After her probationary period, she spent four years undertaking hard labour in the prison kitchen – here, she scrubbed pots and pans and served meals. She was transferred to Aylesbury prison in 1896, where she spent the last eight years of her incarceration and endured a nervous breakdown. Florence highlighted the mental anguish prisoners experienced on account of the monotonous daily routine, physical exhaustion, and lack of hope caused by Victorian incarceration. Although she returned to her native America and tried to reintegrate into society after her release, she never fully recovered from her experiences. She became notoriously reclusive and died alone, impoverished, and estranged from her children, in 1941.



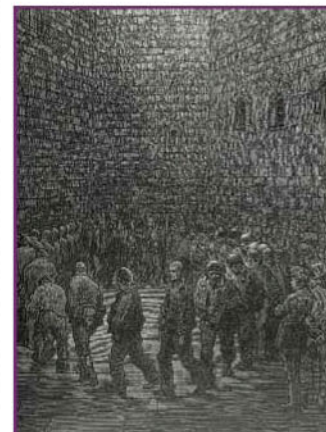


Credit: Peter Newark's Historical Pictures



Left: Prisoners at work in a Victorian prison carpentry workshop

Below: Gustave Doré's depiction of prisoners in the exercise yard at Newgate in 1872



► of isolation and silence saw both of these systems recognised by prisoners and outsiders alike as some of the harshest features of the English prison system.

## THE PRISON ROUTINE

The day in convict prisons began early, between five and six o'clock in the morning. Prisoners had a short time to dress, and make ready for the coming day. Night waste would be disposed of and water cans refilled. Each day began by the sweeping out or scrubbing of the cell. Whilst prisoners readied themselves, a hasty breakfast would also be served. Prisoners were expected to undertake daily worship sitting in their own booths in chapel and forbidden to speak or look at one another – to talk in chapel or otherwise attract the attention of fellow prisoners was a punishable offence. Afterwards, prisoners would return to their cells and a full day of work would begin.

In terms of labour, men might be set to picking oakum, the practice of taking old ships' ropes covered in dirt and tar and pulling them apart fibre by fibre so it could be reused; women would be tasked with sewing shirts or sacks, or knitting stockings. Each convict would have a daily quota that had to be completed in order to avoid punishment. Perhaps surprisingly, the most famous kinds of prison labour – the crank and the treadwheel – were the lot of local prisoners rather than convicts.

At mid-morning, cells would be inspected as the governor did his rounds and the complaints and problems of convicts would be dealt with. Then prisoners would be permitted their daily opportunity for fresh air. The exercise hour (or half hour, depending on prison and inmate) saw prisoners trudge a circular route around

a small stone yard until their time was up. Prisoners would return again to their cells and resume work alone and in silence before the midday meal was served at noon – they would be given time to eat and rest before resuming work in the afternoon. At five, the evening meal would be served and another break taken before working until eight, when a bell would ring to signify the end of a working day. Prisoners were once more inspected in their cells before a lonely ten-hour night. Whilst undergoing separate confinement, prisoners spent 22 hours a day or more alone in their cells.

Prison routine stayed largely the same even after inmates began to associate with others. With others in the main prison, women might undertake domestic work in the laundry or kitchens, or continue with sewing or knitting work. Meanwhile, men would undertake public works such as excavating land or breaking rocks. The day was nonetheless planned to the minute, and the interactions of all prisoners strictly monitored. Men and women might endure these routines, day in and day out, for years at a time, leading many observers to voice concerns over the mental health of prisoners.

## PRIVILEGES AND PENALTIES

Those who followed the rules of prison life to the letter could expect to be placed in the 'first class' (or very occasionally the 'star' class) which entitled them to the best living prison had to offer. First class convicts experienced a full prison diet, easier labour, full marks – leading to a small amount of money upon their release – and the opportunity to send letters and receive visits. However, not all convicts were content to serve their time quietly.



An individual cell at Brixton prison, as shown in Henry Mayhew's 1862 book, *The Criminal Prisons of London*

## Money for old rope

This common phrase, meaning to get money for very little, harks back to the prison practice of picking oakum. The fibres inmates spent up to 14 hours in a day pulling apart from old tar covered rope would be weighed and sold by prison authorities, supposedly contributing to the upkeep of the prison. Prisoners literally earned money from old rope.



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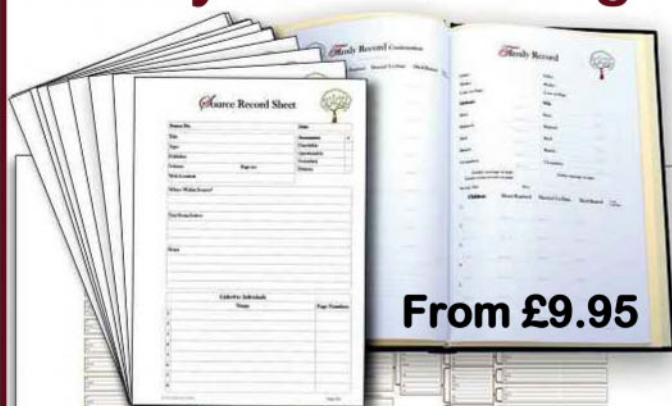
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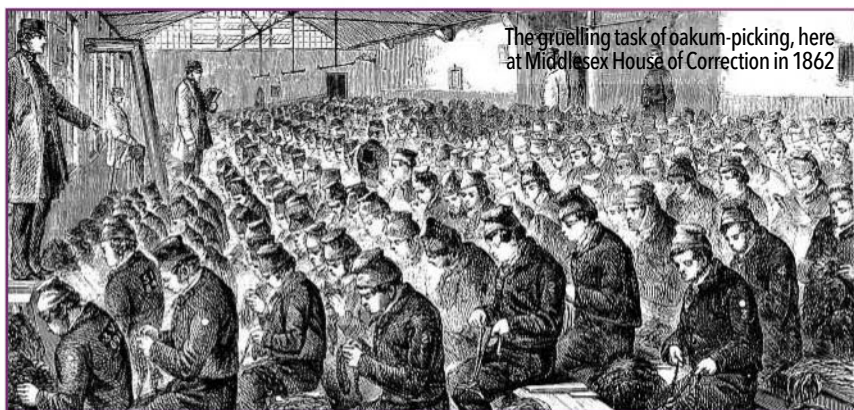
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The gruelling task of oakum-picking, here at Middlesex House of Correction in 1862

► ‘Secondary punishments’ were applied for the minor infraction of prison rules. Talking at the wrong moment, failing to meet a work quota, refusal to carry out instructions from staff, or possessing contraband such as paper and pencils or cigarette ends picked up in the exercise yard were all common offences. Such rule violations would lead to the loss of marks, demotion of class, or a restricted diet of bread and water for a few days.

Prisons were a veritable tinderbox of emotion and violence. Men and women kept confined, silent, and alone for long periods of time were liable to snap with seemingly little provocation. It did not take much for a wrong glance, a word out of place, or otherwise minor event to send prisoners into a rage or fit of destruction which earned them harsh punishment. A clerk for the female convicts in Brixton noted that if letters from the outside were not delivered when expected, a prisoner would “mope over it day after day and work themselves up at last into such a violent fury, that they’ll break and tear up everything about them”.

Convict Mary Lynch, in her first few months at Millbank prison in 1872, broke 24 panes of glass, destroyed all the furniture in her cell, and threatened the matron with violence. Her punishment was to forfeit several hundred of her gratuity marks, to spend three days alone in a punishment cell, to wear an uncomfortable canvas dress for three months and to wear handcuffs whenever out of her cell. She was also to be “deprived as far as possible” the items which she had destroyed. Months later she was again punished with the canvas dress and 28

days of separate confinement for “kicking violently at her cell door, singing, shouting and using bad language, destroying prison property and attempting to throw herself over the railings of D ward”. In her 13 years of imprisonment, Mary had over 30 prison offences recorded against her for insolence, bad language, violence, and refusal to do as she was told. Her experiences were far from uncommon.

Despite a damning report from the prison commission in 1895 which discredited the convict system and called for the reform of prisoner welfare, the system of penal servitude continued until 1948. The Criminal Justice Act of that year made provisions for the modern prison system that continue today. Although the days of penal servitude may be long gone, some of the most famous Victorian convict prisons like Pentonville, Brixton, and Dartmoor are still in use. Lawbreakers today might be walking closer than they realise to the footsteps of our convict ancestors. ■

## FURTHER READING

Philip Priestley, *Victorian Prison Lives* (Pimlico, 1999, ISBN 9780712665872)

Edward Marston, *Prison: Five Hundred Years of Life Behind Bars* (The National Archives, 2009, ISBN 9781905615339)

Michelle Higgs, *Prison Life in Victorian England* (The History Press, 2007, ISBN 9780752442556)

Florence Maybrick, *Mrs Maybrick’s own story; my fifteen lost years* (Funk and Wagnalls Company, 2004, available via [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org))

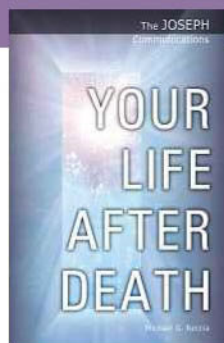
Henry Mayhew and John Binney, *Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison* (Frank Cass & Co LTD, 1971 (original 1862), ISBN 0714614114)

## Key dates

*Prisons, and prison life, rapidly changed over the 19th century*

- 1791** Jeremy Bentham designs his ‘panopticon’. This ideal prison was never built, but it informed the building of some of Victorian England’s most famous prisons.
- 1816** Millbank, the first great 19th century convict prison, opened to house those sentenced to at least five years.
- 1821** Brixton Prison opens as the Surrey House of correction. Overcrowding was a problem and it earned a reputation as one of the worst prisons in London.
- 1842** Pentonville Prison opens. It was originally intended to house convicts awaiting transportation.
- 1857** The Penal Servitude Act is passed, substituting terms of transportation for imprisonment in England.
- 1867** The last convict vessel sets out for Western Australia, ending transportation to the colonies there.
- 1868** The Criminal Punishment Amendment Act decrees that all hangings must be carried out privately inside prison walls.
- 1878** Under the Prison Act, all prisons come under control of central government. Some of the oldest and worst prisons in England are closed.
- 1895** The ‘Gladstone Report’ is published, detailing the failings of the Victorian prison system and suggesting future reforms.
- 1902** The first prison for juvenile delinquents opens in Borstal, Kent.
- 1922** The practice of separate confinement officially ends.
- 1948** The Criminal Justice Act is passed, and reforms begin that shape modern penal policy.





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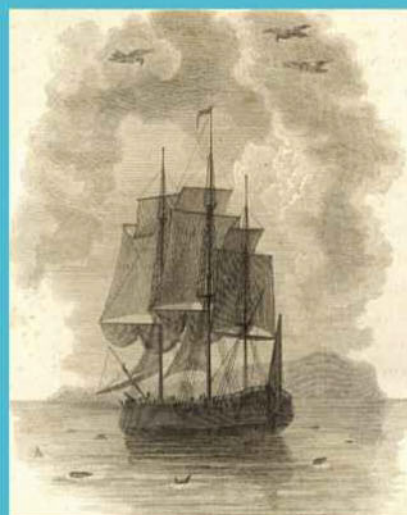
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Berks Cemetery Extension of the Ploegsteert Memorial

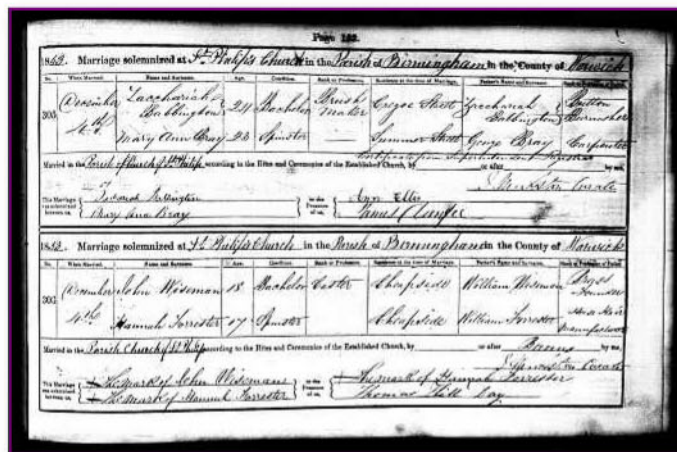


**Q** My ancestor was killed in World War 1 – his name was Joseph William Bibby, of the 12/90 East Yorkshire Regiment. All the time I was growing up, my grandma, who was one of his sisters, spoke very proudly of him, and told me of him being an Acting Sergeant Major when he was killed. I have looked on various sites, and the best I can find is Sergeant. However, I have a copy of a letter sent to 'Miss Bibby' (presumably to my grandma, but she had six sisters), from a Denis Tyndall,

the chaplain of his regiment, stating his rank. I was wondering if there is any way I can find if there is any proof of this? He has a memorial in France where he is referred to as a sergeant.

**David Hammond**

**A** Your ancestor was an original member of the 12th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment – the 3rd Hull Pals battalion, often referred to as the 'Hull Sportsmans'. His number indicates he joined the day the battalion was formed in Hull



Lisa Spooner's ancestor, John Wiseman, married Hannah Forrester at St Philip's, Birmingham, in 1853

on 11th August 1914. A search of his records on the Ancestry website shows that his rank shown throughout the records was Sergeant. This would have made him a platoon Sergeant assisting an officer who was in command of the platoon of just under fifty soldiers. The rank of Sergeant Major you refer to would likely have been Company Sergeant Major (CSM), often the next step up the rank ladder for a Sergeant. A CSM would assist a Captain or Major in their command of a company of men, normally of over 200 men. A usual route to this rank was to be promoted as an Acting Company Sergeant Major, which would be a temporary appointment, and once the soldier had proved himself this would be made permanent. As the records for your ancestor consistently show him as a Sergeant, then

it seems his appointment was never formalised. He died whilst serving with the 11th Battalion East Yorks. In their battalion history, they list all of the Sergeant Majors company by company, and incidentally he is now shown here. So it may be sadly a mystery that is never solved. On the day he died his battalion was in action at a place called La Motte near Merville, but he is commemorated on the Ploegsteert Memorial in Belgium. **PR**

### WHICH WISEMAN?

**Q** I am hoping that you may be able to help me to solve a dilemma concerning my Birmingham-born ancestor, John Wiseman. I have him on the 1861, 1871 and 1881 censuses. In 1861, the family

## Specialist Q&A panel

Our expert team answers your genealogy questions



### Paul Reed

Paul is a military historian and author who specialises in the two world wars. He works as a battlefield guide and has appeared on various TV programmes.



### Doreen Hopwood

Doreen is a former professional genealogist for the City of Birmingham, and has been writing for YFT since the first issue.



### Chris Paton

Chris is an expert on Scottish research, and a professional genealogist. He runs the Scotland's Greatest Story service.



### Nell Darby

YFT's editor Nell has been writing about social and criminal history for over a decade and also has a PhD in history.

## Remembered by a town

**Q** My grandfather, William Bruce Johnstone, MM, was killed in action in 1917 and was buried at Langemarck, a small village four miles from Ypres, in Belgium. He was born in Bedlington, Northumberland, where the Johnstone family have been since 1860, and enlisted in the Lancashire Fusiliers (1st Battalion). Years later, the watch in the photographs found its way back to my father, George Jordan Johnstone, who passed away in 1979. The inscription on the back of the watch says “Presented to Pte W B Johnstone by the people of Farnworth in recognition

of distinguished services rendered in the Great War 1914–18”. This watch is now secure in our family. The question remains why would the good people of Farnworth present this to my grandfather, and what the crest is on the cover of the watch. If anyone could throw some light on this issue it would be greatly appreciated by our family.

**Derek Johnstone**

**A** It would appear that the design on the front cover of the watch follows the initials of your ancestor. It is not a World War 1 military badge or any form of period insignia. It was quite common to decorate watch covers at this time

with a monogram and I suspect this was the case here. Farnworth is near to Manchester and not far from Bury, the headquarters of the Lancashire Fusiliers, and likely a recruiting area for this regiment in the early phase of the war.

As your ancestor was awarded the Military Medal for bravery perhaps it was for rescuing or helping someone with a connection to this town? It was unusual under these circumstances for a town or locality to mark an event like this with a presentation, which is perhaps how this watch came about. A good start to track down some background on this would be to look at the local



newspapers for Farnworth in the lead-up to when your ancestor was killed to see if there is any mention of it. The Lancashire Fusilier museum in Bury might also be able to help ([www.fusiliermuseum.com](http://www.fusiliermuseum.com)). Your ancestor died in the Third Battle of Ypres and prior to this, the 1st Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers had been in action for some time in the Battle of Arras – so perhaps the act of gallantry was during this period of the conflict. **PR**

was wrongly recorded as ‘Wileman’, but I know its them because the names of the children are correct, – and the name of his wife, Hannah. These three records place him as being born around 1831-1832. His death certificate, of 27 January 1886, recorded his age as 54, but I can’t find any definite record of birth or baptism, and I have hit my ‘wall’. There’s a tenuous link to a John Wiseman who would enable be to go back to 1691, but he has a different birth year, so what if it is not actually him? The 1841 census shows a 12-year-old John Wiseman in the Birmingham Asylum for Infants. His estimated birth year was 1829 – not exact, but could this be close enough? Unfortunately, the records haven’t survived, meaning that (if this is him) I can take his story no further back. But is it him?

John Wiseman married Hannah Forrester on 4 December 1853 and the

marriage certificate gives his age as 18 – placing his year of birth more in the region of 1835/6. His father’s name is shown as William Wiseman, and with this I searched again and came up with several alternative John Wisemans. I have become a little confused with the various men now presenting themselves as the potential missing piece of my family tree jigsaw.

I am attempting to write my family history but I want to get it right. For one of the John Wiseman candidates, I traced the direct family line right back to 1691, but is this ‘my’ family history or simply a good story that I have conjured up with the magic of internet record searching multiplied by imagination?!

**Lisa Spooner (née Wiseman)**

**A** Once we get back to 1837 when the registration of births, marriages and deaths was established in England and Wales, it becomes more difficult to identify whether

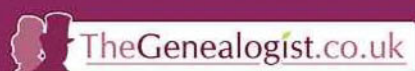
or not we’ve found the right person because surviving records don’t usually provide as much information as civil registration certificates. As you’ve identified several John Wisemans within the relevant timeframe, I suggest that you try to find out as much information about each of these, and carry out a process of elimination. Look for them in later censuses, marriage records and deaths to narrow down the number of potential candidates. The 1841 Birmingham census has one entry for a John Wiseman with a father named William, but he was a book-keeper, and your ancestor’s father was a brass founder. John’s marriage certificate shows his address as Cheapside and I found his wife, Hannah Forrester living there on the 1851 census with her widowed mother, also Hannah, who appears to have been one of the witnesses at John and Hannah’s wedding. The certificate doesn’t indicate

that William Forrester was deceased, so its possible that William Wiseman had also died before then.

The Birmingham Asylum for the Infant Poor was opened in 1797 and could accommodate up to 400 children. It closed in 1852, and although there aren’t any surviving registers, the institution was administered by the Poor Law Guardians and there may be some information among their minutes. These records are deposited at the Library of Birmingham and you’ll find the online catalogue at [www.libraryofbirmingham.com](http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com) or e-mail [archives.heritage@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:archives.heritage@birmingham.gov.uk).

Even though John consistently gave his place of birth as Birmingham on the later census returns, I suggest that you widen the search for his possible baptism. By the mid 19th century, Birmingham’s population was increasing rapidly as workers were needed for the growing industries, and the brass





# "How do I find an ancestor who left these shores?"

TheGenealogist's Becky Bayley talks you through the migration records you can find online

**T**heGenealogist has a strong immigration and emigration record set that can be used to find ancestors who came to or went from the United Kingdom and Ireland. TheGenealogist also recently released five million Emigration BT27 records as part of this growing record set. These contain the historical records of passengers who departed by sea from Britain in the years between 1896 and 1909. These new records significantly boost the already strong immigration, emigration, naturalisation and passenger list resources on TheGenealogist.

Let us look for John Graham, who was born in 1865. He was a china repairer from the USA, who left from England in the early 1900s to sail back to

America. To find a passenger on TheGenealogist we simply choose Immigration, Emigration and Travel records, and then select the Passenger Lists. Entering his name into the search, choosing 1900 with a range of five years to begin with and then entering England as a country of departure and United States as the country of arrival, gives us a number of results. When searching for a passenger, we can narrow down our search if we know the port of departure and or port of arrival of our ancestor.

The results for John Graham return only one result for someone whose occupation is china repairer - he travelled on 7 October 1905. Other details we can see by clicking on the transcript is that he was recorded as foreign. This is because he was on a British ship, the Cunard Line's RMS



Campania, and he was an American. Against his result there is an icon for a family, which means that he was not travelling alone. Clicking on TheGenealogist's SmartSearch shows that he was travelling with his 38-year-old wife. We can also find other information in the records, such as the ticket number, who the ship's captain was, and the length of the passage of the voyage.

At one time, the Campania held the Blue Riband, as she had crossed the Atlantic in less than six days on her second voyage in 1893. However, she was now scheduled for a more leisurely crossing after she had



called in at Queenstown (now known as Cobh) in Ireland.

Sadly some of the passengers never made it to the other side of the Atlantic. As reported in the New York Times of 14 October 1905, John Graham was one of five passengers to be lost when a gigantic wave rolled over the steamer and swept across a deck thick with steerage passengers. So sudden was the disaster, and so great was the confusion which occurred, that even the officers of the steamer themselves were unable to estimate the full extent of the tragedy on the vessel's arrival into New York.

► trade was one of the main ones. This could account for him not being found the 1841 and 1851 census returns in Birmingham - and people were still wary of giving their actual place of birth in case they were sent back there. It was often easier to say you were born in the place where you were enumerated.

When looking for John's baptism, I suggest that you extend your search to cover a wider time period and area, and include nonconformist places of worship as well. People weren't always baptised in infancy, and it's interesting

to note that the only baptism I found in respect of John and Hannah's children was that of their eldest son, George, who was born on 22 September 1854 but not baptised until 7 December 1873 - when he was 19 years old.

You've already identified a spelling variation of 'Wiseman' on the 1861 census, so keep a lookout for others, and it would be worthwhile to keep in mind any Anglicisation of a surname, such as Weissman.

You're exactly right in wanting to prove every link before adding information to

your family tree - as you say, there's so much information now available online, that it's easy to fall into the trap of following the wrong family. Remember too that there's a wealth of material held in record offices and libraries, much of which isn't included in online catalogues. Good luck with your continuing research. **DH**

## WHERE DID THE SHOESMITHS GO?

**Q** I am having trouble finding much about my great-uncle, Louis William Shoesmith.

I have found a birth for him in 1871 in the St George Hanover Square district. He is in the 1881 census in Beaumaris, Anglesey, with the rest of his family, but not in the 1891 census in West Derby, Lancashire. I can't find him in either the 1901 or 1911 censuses, but I have found his death in 1918 in Hailsham, Sussex. His mother was Mary Ann Shoesmith, née Beeching, and his father was Louis William Shoesmith, who he was named after.

**B R Easton**





Departure  
of the RMS  
Campania  
from Liverpool

Checking TheGenealogist's collection of Overseas Marine Deaths adds another record to our research. Here, we find John Graham's death in the handwritten index for 1905.

Many people travelling across the Atlantic were on their way to a new life in America. Uniquely, TheGenealogist's passenger lists allow us to track the transmigration of people across countries routing through British ports. One example of this is Josephine Kessler and family, who

were on their way to New York via Southampton on 6 November 1907. The passenger lists show us that they started their journey at Le Havre in France.

With TheGenealogist's historical records of passengers who departed by sea from Britain in the years between 1896 and 1909 joining the many immigration, emigration, naturalisation records in its collection, researchers can track down ancestors who left these shores for other parts of the world.

As a special Christmas offer to all *Your Family Tree* readers, you can purchase a four-month Diamond package for only £39.95, which includes a free online periodical. This saves you a huge £44.95! Visit [www.thegenealogist.co.uk/YFTATG4D](http://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/YFTATG4D) now!

**A**s you are probably aware, the Shoemsmiths were a military family, the father, Louis William Shoemsmith, being in the Scots Guards, with his postings resulting in his children being born in London, Ireland and Wales. I am not sure how you found the family in West Derby in 1891, as I located the elder Louis William Shoemsmith in Beaumaris in both 1881 and 1891 (in the former, he is listed as colour sergeant in the Scots Guards, and living at 9 Saxon Street; in the former, he and his family are

living in the Sergeant Major's Quarters at the Royal Militia Barracks in Beaumaris). My first thought was that perhaps the younger Louis William had followed his father into the army, and his postings abroad may have resulted in his absence from the censuses after 1881.

However, the truth is more prosaic, and, as often happens, is more about how names were listed by the enumerator, or how they have been transcribed more recently. Although the younger Louis William does seem to be absent

from the 1891 census, I found him elsewhere. He married Emily Ada Murray in Fulham in 1898, and so I looked for a Louis and Emily Shoemsmith in the 1901 census. Ancestry did not come up with any results, but on TheGenealogist, I found an entry for Louis W Shoemsmith, born Westminster, and his wife Emily, born in Pimlico, living in Bexhill, Sussex, with their one-year-old daughter Mabel. At this time, Louis was working as a printer's cutter. Bexhill was Louis's father's place of birth, and also where the older Louis appears to have died in 1899.

The transcription of the 1911 census online had no Louis William Shoemsmith listed, despite him clearly signing his name in full at the bottom of the census form. This is because when he detailed the members of his household, he gave his own name as L W Shoemsmith, and so a search for his full name did not return results. In 1911, he was still living in Bexhill, but now had several more children – John, Arthur, Flossie, Ivy and Irene – and was working as a 'jobbing gardener'.

So a general guide for finding missing ancestors is to try different websites when the first fails to give you a result for your ancestor in the census, as different search engines and transcriptions may give you different results. It's also worth broadening your search terms if an exact name is not found – try an initial, or simply a surname with date or place of birth. Census searches can be an inexact science, as this case shows. **ND**

## AN IRISH BIRTH

**Q** My Scottish ancestor came from Ireland, but I have no idea from where – the 1851 Scotland census simply notes him as 'John Morgan, age 26 born Ireland'. I also know from his marriage and death records in Scotland

that his parents were Thomas Morgan and Sarah Paterson. How would I go about finding a marriage between these two to narrow down his point of origin in Ireland?

**Sue Broadway**

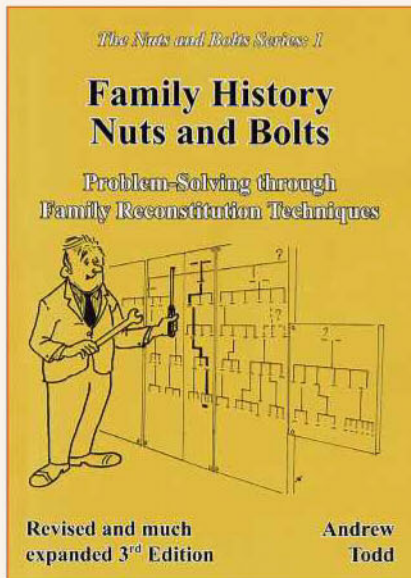
**A** The most comprehensive searchable database for records from this period is the subscription based Irish Family History Foundation at [www.rootsireland.ie](http://www.rootsireland.ie), which should be your first port of call for Thomas' and Sarah's marriage, via a parish record. However this database is not complete, and the record may not be there, in which case you will need to find more information about John to try to find further clues. If John was married and had a child in 1855, the first year of Scottish civil registration, then you may be lucky, as for this year only, both parents were required to give their age and birthplace in the child's birth entry – these records are available at [www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk). You should also search for siblings of John to check their census and civil registration records for clues – if they married in Ireland, for example, and then had children in Scotland, the post-1855 birth records will note where they married and when.

Another possible clue may lie in post-1845 poor relief applications, which may note his parish of origin in order for any payments to be reclaimed from the original parish of settlement. Kirsty Wilkinson's guide to the location of such records may help at [http://myainfolk.com/Resources\\_files/Records\\_of\\_the\\_Scottish\\_Poor.pdf](http://myainfolk.com/Resources_files/Records_of_the_Scottish_Poor.pdf).

Finally, if John's father died and left a will, it may name him in Scotland as a beneficiary. A post-1858 searchable calendar for these is online at [www.willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie/search/cwa/home.jsp](http://www.willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie/search/cwa/home.jsp). **CP**



# Family History Nuts and Bolts



**Buy it for:** Any family historian eager to glean new ideas for solving research problems  
**Win it for Christmas! See page 88 opposite**

A new edition of a family history classic offers useful tips

**Author & publisher:** Andrew Todd  
**w.** [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)  
**ISBN:** 9780948781261  
**Price:** £8.00

Every family historian comes up against brick walls in their research at times, and any advice on how to breach them can come as manna from genealogical heaven.

Andrew Todd's unique book first appeared in 1998, was revised in 2000, and, after a long period of being hard to find, has now emerged in this third, significantly-expanded edition – up from 64 pages to 108.

Its core premise is that many family history problems can be solved by careful, thorough application of 'family reconstitution' techniques. What might sound intimidating is fact simply the

process of exploring an individual's wider family in depth – for example, looking at siblings can provide valuable information about their mother's age from calculating her child-bearing years. Todd warns that one can take this methodology to many levels – just to glean more info on one family unit, say, or indeed to fall down the rabbit hole of a worldwide one-name study!

There's much to be said on this method, and Todd is impressive for his meticulous and sometimes inspirational thinking. It must be a rare family historian, beginner or expert alike, who can't learn something from the many tips and methods suggested here.

This is not a beginner's guide, by any means, but offers a powerful methodological toolkit that any family historian can use and gain from. ■

## Timeline

**Creator:** Frédéric Henry  
**w.** [www.findyourgamestore.co.uk](http://www.findyourgamestore.co.uk)  
**Price:** £12.99



If you're looking for an easy-to-play history-themed game for Christmas, Timeline is well worth a look. The

premise is simple – each player (two to eight of them) has a hand of cards depicting historical events, and you must play all of your cards into the correct place on a growing timeline.

It's not a game for serious strategists, but it makes for a quick, fun thing to do at parties, and works best with more players. There are five themed sets, so you can keep the challenge fresh with extra cards. ■

**Buy it for:** A fun family card game

### WIN FOR CHRISTMAS!

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# Andrew Todd

We talk to Andrew about his updated guide to 'family reconstitution' techniques for problem-solving

**A**ndrew Todd was a teacher of history and politics for 25 years. He now works as a counsellor and psychotherapist and has recently been rediscovering the joys of writing and publishing.

## How did you first become interested in family history?

Following the death of my father in 1976. I was fascinated by his grandfather's migration from Suffolk to Manchester 100 years before.

## What are your most interesting discoveries in your own family tree?

It seems pernicious to pick out from all that mass of ancestors, every one of whom dealt with all the practical and emotional challenges of life, but here are a few: my father's experience as a PoW in Italy and Germany, culminating in the infamous forced march across Germany in the last winter of World War 2; his great-grandfather, Edward Gatenby, a Manchester cotton spinner who somehow ended up fighting for the Union side in the American Civil War, being disabblingly wounded at Shiloh, 1862; another ancestor, John Booth, suffered a sabre wound at Peterloo, 1819; and Samuel

Smiles's disciple, George Smethurst, who spent his childhood in a Manchester workhouse but died with a housekeeper and shares in the Manchester Ship Canal.

## Why do you think the 'nuts and bolts' of family reconstitution have been generally overlooked in the family history world?

Everyone is tempted to 'train spot' ancestors, and this is aggravated by ease of access to so many records online.

## Can you summarise the main changes in the new edition?

There are many more illustrations; what I call the Full Life Approach, to build up clues from every record that an ancestor figured in; practical techniques to escape the 'pre-Victorian mire', that half-century from 1780 to the 1830s, characterised by growing population, and under registration (also, migration, especially into towns, created an interface of dialects which few incoming surnames survived intact).

## What do you think are the most overlooked or most useful records for pursuing family reconstitution?

Ironically, it's the bread-and-butter parishes register that are most neglected.

I don't see as many researchers combing them in detail as they did pre-internet, squeezing out the extra nuggets such as family baptisms and marriages. Also, they miss the simple sense of the social and economic context which is central to successful research.

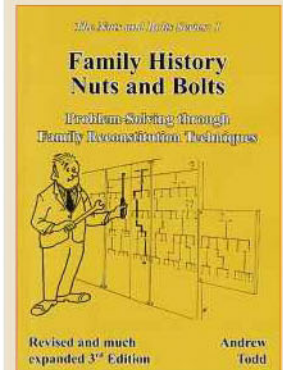
## Are there 'brick walls' in your own research you are still stuck with?

I have fallen foul of the same great blockages that everybody encounters:  
1. 'Where did they come from?' It always seems to be the late 18th century! In my case the Newberys, who arrived in Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire; the Lowes – Deane parish, near Bolton, coalminers; and the Lords – into the Bolton area – shoemakers.  
2. 'Which one is mine?' My mother's grandfather, William Leeson, came to Manchester from Birmingham/Coventry c1875, but either never married or fell through civil registration gaps.

## Are you reissuing your other books, or producing new ones?

I'm currently working on an enlarged edition of the surnames book I wrote 20 years ago – taking the same approach, making accessible to family history researchers the mass of excellent research on surnames now in print. ■

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# The Last Confession of Thomas Hawkins

Second gripping historical mystery from Antonia Hodgson

**Author:** Antonia Hodgson  
**Publisher:** Hodder & Stoughton  
**w.** [www.hodder.co.uk](http://www.hodder.co.uk)  
**ISBN:** 9781444775457  
**Price:** £14.99

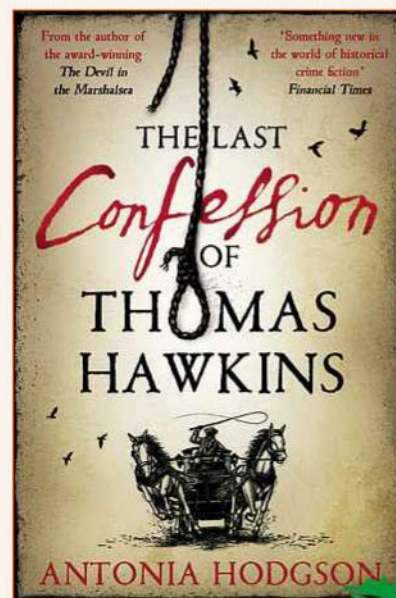
Antonia Hodgson's first book, *The Devil in the Marshalsea*, introduced readers to the Georgian rake Thomas Hawkins. Published last year, it won the prestigious Historical Dagger award. This year's follow-up, *The Last Confession of Thomas Hawkins*, catches up with Hawkins at the moment that he is being dragged to the Tyburn gallows. Like its predecessor, it is a highly recommended read.

The Last Confession sees Thomas

Hawkins accused of murder following involvement with a notorious London criminal, the king's mistress, and the queen, Caroline. Like her first book, Hodgson writes a gripping work of crime fiction, a mystery story, that just so happens to be set in early 18th century London; the narrative is just as gripping as the historical setting.

Historical fiction is a difficult thing to get right; the research needs to be spot-on, yet not be obtrusive, and this is a balance that Hodgson manages to get right, with aplomb. Her research is undoubtedly diligent – even some of the characters inhabiting her fictional works are based on real-life people. The wealth of factual detail gives you confidence in her writing – you feel as though you are in 18th century London, and seeing and smelling its residents, their desperation and their corruption. ■

**Buy it for:** Those who want a well-researched historical mystery and a complex, gripping, read



## WIN FOR CHRISTMAS!

Catch up with Thomas Hawkins' earlier adventures! YFT has **three copies** of Antonia Hodgson's previous book, *The Devil in the Marshalsea*, to give away! To enter our Christmas competition, please visit [www.historymags.co.uk/yftxmas](http://www.historymags.co.uk/yftxmas)



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Even some of the characters are based on real-life people

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## Living on the Home Front

**Author:** Megan Westley  
**Publisher:** Amberley  
**w.** [www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com)  
**ISBN:** 9781445645278  
**Price:** £9.99

There's now a whole genre where people 'live' the historical life, muck, warts and all. This book offers an interesting blend of that with a general social history of the home front during World War 2, a timely accompaniment to the release of the 1939 Register.

Westley follows the wartime era year by year, but also as a calendar – this is because she spent 12 months living 'home front style', right down to mimicking rationing and trying to 'make do and mend'. The result is entertaining as well as informative. An index might have been nice, and the reproduction of photos is disappointing, but it's an engaging piece of 'living history'. ■

**Buy it for:** Anyone interested in social history or a trip down memory lane



# Custodian 4

Drowning in a sea of documents? Let Custodian 4 bring order to your chaos

**Publisher:** Sonja Smith  
**w.** [www.custodian3.co.uk](http://www.custodian3.co.uk)  
**Price:** Price: £24.95 (download), £29.95 (CD)

*Custodian 4* is a tool for Windows PCs that is primarily concerned with giving you a central repository for all your documents, allowing you to record their details in a spreadsheet-like database. There are numerous templates covering a wide range of record types – all the major bases are covered, of course, but you'll find everything from school records and probates to migration and cemetery inscriptions is covered, plus you can create your own from scratch.

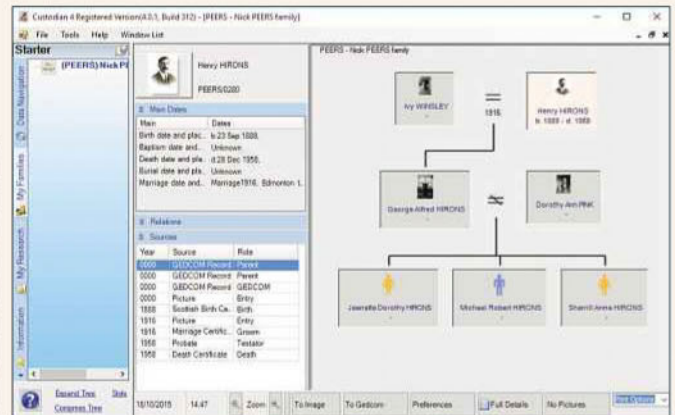
Data entry is done using a spreadsheet-like view, which can get a little cumbersome.

Some templates, most notably census and BMD records, provide a 'View Certificate' option, which allows you to input all the data in a window that's laid out in a similar way to the original document.

You can also attach photos and video clips to records, although these have to be imported and recorded separately before being linked.

As you build up your document library, Custodian manages a handy names and places index, giving you the opportunity to start linking documents to individuals. Speed things up by importing a GEDCOM file (the program also allows you to import previously recorded documents from Excel or Access too).

The program is primarily



You can build a family tree, but it'll only accept data from records you input, not imported GEDCOM entries

used as a companion to a family history program such as Family Historian, but that can lead to a lot of data duplication.

Some users have attempted to use its new My Family view to make it their primary program, but we found it a little too awkward to use for that, with some counterintuitive touches like no automatic saving of records or

updating of other views.

Custodian may not replace your main family tree program. However its ability to record, manage and present all your documentary evidence in detail make it worth checking out as a potentially handy addition to your genealogy toolkit. ■

**Use it for:** storing, indexing and organising records and documents

## ShareX

**Publisher:** ShareX Team  
**w.** <http://getsharex.com>  
**Price:** Free



ShareX will appeal to those who are looking for a quick and fast way to upload and share photos and video using social media, email and other online services. You can capture or record the screen or drag existing files into the program, then edit or apply effects to the image or video before uploading it and finally sharing a link using the likes of Facebook and Twitter. ShareX is packed with options, but because the user interface is logically laid out you can focus on the basics, ensuring those looking for a fast and fuss-free solution won't be left floundering. ■

**Use it for:** grabbing and share photos and video in Windows

## Famicity

Bring families together with this online portal

**Publisher:** Famicity  
**w.** [www.famicity.com](http://www.famicity.com)  
**Price:** Free

Famicity.com is a website that's designed to bring families together by providing a convenient online portal for sharing photos, news, stories and more. Crucially, for family historians, there's an online tree you can populate too, allowing you to link stories (or 'diaries') to ancestors for others to find.

Android and iOS apps aim to simplify the task of using the site by providing you with a convenient interface – which largely mirrors what's online

– through which to view and edit your stories and other information.

Unfortunately, the app isn't capable enough to allow you to do away with your web browser entirely – certain features such as uploading a GEDCOM file or adding descriptions and dates to photos aren't accessible from the app. Nevertheless, if you're willing to use it as a companion to the website rather than relying on it for all your editing needs, then



Post stories, share photos, update your tree and more with the Famicity app

the Famicity app may prove useful. ■

**Use it for:** accessing, and editing, your Famicity website



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## BROWN

I am seeking the naval career of my grandfather Henry Brown, who was born in Woolwich on 13 August 1891. He married in Dalton-in-Furness in 1916 and had two sons. At that time, he was an engineer in the Merchant Navy (Dis A number 732240 and Identity Certificate number 121547). I wrote to Southampton Archives for help but all they could offer were two ships – 149317 Solange and 161279 S/S Anglo Saxon. There were two Anglo Saxons – the latter torpedoed during WW2 with only one survivor (not Henry). I am yet to find anything about Solange. Any help would be very much appreciated.

LINDA COPLAND, VIA EMAIL



# Seeking...

Hit a brick wall in your research? Need contributions for a research project? See if our readers can help out

The fact is that during the course of your family research you may come up against a barrier that refuses to budge, no matter where you look for the solution. Instead of worrying, why not write in to *Your Family Tree's* Seeking pages to find the answers?

Using the Seeking service is free and very simple. You can email your query (and any photographs or documents), with Seeking as the subject header, to [yft@historymags.co.uk](mailto:yft@historymags.co.uk). Remember to include your contact details so that other *Your Family Tree* readers can get in touch with you if they can help you out. Please also try to submit your query accurately and in the format you see on these pages.

If you'd like a more immediate response, why not post your enquiry (and any images) on our Facebook page? Just visit [www.facebook.com/yourfamilytreemaguk](http://www.facebook.com/yourfamilytreemaguk) and create a new post entitled 'seeking'. Alternatively, you can tweet us at [www.twitter.com/yourfamtreemag](https://twitter.com/yourfamtreemag) and we will see if others can help you.

We have also opened up the Seeking pages to other readers and researchers needing help with history projects, so if this is you, get in touch.

Of course, it could be that your research is going brilliantly, but why not read these listings anyway to see if you can help someone else out? And if you find what you were looking for, why not write to us and tell us?

## FOOT

I have been trying to uncover a family mystery concerning my Uncle Arthur. He was born in 1903 to my grandparents, Albert Edwin Foot and

Elizabeth Kate (née Finch), who lived at 16 Garibaldi Street, Portsmouth. Apart from a mention along with his parents and siblings in the 1911 census, nothing

more seems to have been seen or heard from him. My grandparents married in 1899, and had seven children in all – Albert George (1894-1957), Daisy, who was born in 1896 and only lived for six months, Kate Elizabeth (1900-1976), who was unmarried, but was a nanny then companion to the Wiseman family, George, born in 1901 but who also only survived for six months, Arthur, then Jim (1905-1954) and finally, Frederick Walter (1908-1959), my father.

TONY FOOT, VIA EMAIL

on the electoral roll (we know what happened to Emily). We did find a death record of a Oliver Livesey who died 11 February 1967 in Stoke-on-Trent, but we're not convinced this is the same man.

SHARON BARNES,  
VIA FACEBOOK

## FOUND: HOLCRAFT

Heather Smith was asking about the Holcraft/Houlcraft family (Seeking, issue 161). The marriages, burials and baptisms of this family appear on the Lancashire OPC website ([www.lan-opc.org.uk](http://www.lan-opc.org.uk)), within the Prescott parish. Some of the original records are also on Ancestry. John had the following siblings: Ellen (1794-1796), Ellen (b and d 1797), Thomas (1798), Mary (1801), Elizabeth (1804), Ellen (1807) and John (1813). Two more children were stillborn in 1810 and 1812. John died in 1823 aged 51; Elizabeth died in 1848, aged 78. Elizabeth is on the 1841 census, living in Prescott with 40 year old Mary Hobbins and two Hobbins children – I think Mary

# Military Voices

The voices of war – West Sussex veterans speak

You can get involved in this new history project



Military Voices Past and Present is a new project calling for help. This oral history project, run by West Sussex County Council Library Service, aims to compare the experiences and sacrifices made by Great War

combatants with those made by modern-day veterans. It is looking for military veterans who are willing to be interviewed about their wartime experiences, and is also hoping to find volunteers to conduct the interviews.

The project, which will run until November 2018, would like to talk to veterans living in West Sussex who have experienced any conflict, from World War 2 to the recent wars in the Gulf and Afghanistan. Their experiences and views will then be analysed and compared with those of their World War 2 predecessors.

If you can help, either as a veteran or a volunteer, please contact Alison Musk at [alison.musk@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:alison.musk@westsussex.gov.uk). You can find more information at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/the-voices-of-war-west-sussex-veterans-speak](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/the-voices-of-war-west-sussex-veterans-speak)





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Hobbins must be Elizabeth's daughter. I hope this helps.  
ANNE BERRESFORD, VIA EMAIL

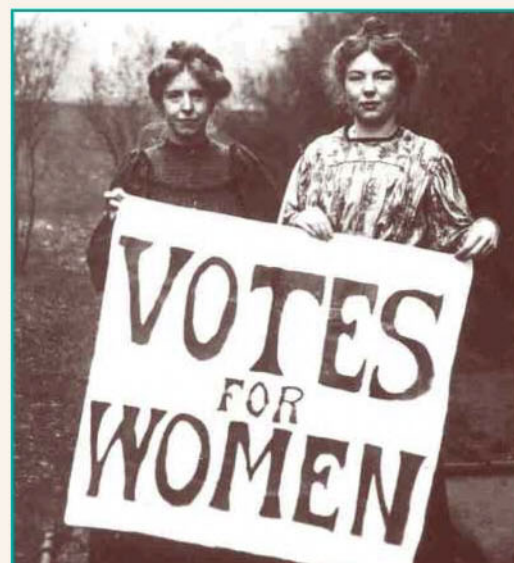
I think Heather Smith is being too hard on herself. I'm sure others have by now agreed with her that she has the right family. If she needs further proof, she should look at the nephew, William Hobbins, aged 16, who is with the couple on the 1851 census. In 1841, he is at Prescott, aged six, with Elizabeth Houlcroft (69), Mary Hobbins (40), and John Hobbins (9). Mary Houlcroft married William Hobbins, an engine smith, on 29 January 1832 at St Peter's, Liverpool. Mary was born at Prescott in 1801, according to other censuses, and there is a baptism for her on 24 May 1801, daughter of John and Elizabeth Houlcroft, watchmaker, at Prescott. These are the same parents, occupation and place as John's baptism on 25 July 1813. That is an awful lot of coincidences, and I'm sure she is onto the right family.  
CATHARINE STEVENS,  
VIA EMAIL

## Seeking Suffragette ancestors

I am an established writer on all aspects of the women's suffrage movement, and would dearly like to hear from any YFT readers who hold a collection of family papers relating to a suffragette or suffragist ancestor. My website, at [www.womanandhersphere.com](http://www.womanandhersphere.com), gives full details of my research and publications.

I am also researching in detail artists-both men and women - associated with the suffrage movement, and would welcome contact with anyone who knows anything of the life of someone they think might fall into that category.

ELIZABETH CRAWFORD  
[e.crawford@sphere20.freemove.co.uk](mailto:e.crawford@sphere20.freemove.co.uk)



Catharine also found other children born to John and Elizabeth: Ellen (born 4 June 1797), Thomas (born 28 July 1798), Elizabeth (born 8 February 1807), and another Ellen (born 10 January 1807).

### FOUND: CARTER

I've got a possible baptism for John Carter, bricklayer, from Islington (Seeking, issue 161).

It's at the City of London Lying-in Hospital, for 26 November 1815, to John and Elizabeth Carter, Private of the Light Dragoons regiment. Perhaps this would explain the various birthplaces of John, with his father being posted abroad. There is a John Carter signing up to serve in Canada (on Ancestry) - he was born 1789 in Fulham, an ex-brickmaker and 9th Foot

of Westminster Militia, 5 ft 7 and with a variety of tattoos. Could this be his dad, signing up on 4 August 1803 aged 14, and in latter years returning to the London area where he was born and taking up his old profession? I have no experience of military records, but it's perhaps worth following up.  
CATHARINE STEVENS,  
VIA EMAIL

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**CONTRIBUTORS** Anthony Adolph, Else Churchill, Ann Griffiths, Michelle Higgs, Doreen Hopwood, Raymond Humphreys, David Lewiston Sharpe, Audrey Linkman, Nicola Lisle, Kev Lochun, Chris Paton, Nick Peers, Paul Reed, Colin Waters, Cate Williams, Lucy Williams

**Illustrations** Jez Bridgeman, Garry Walton

**ADVERTISING Advertisement Sales** Daniel Lindsey +44 (0) 20 7907 6633 **Advertising Director**

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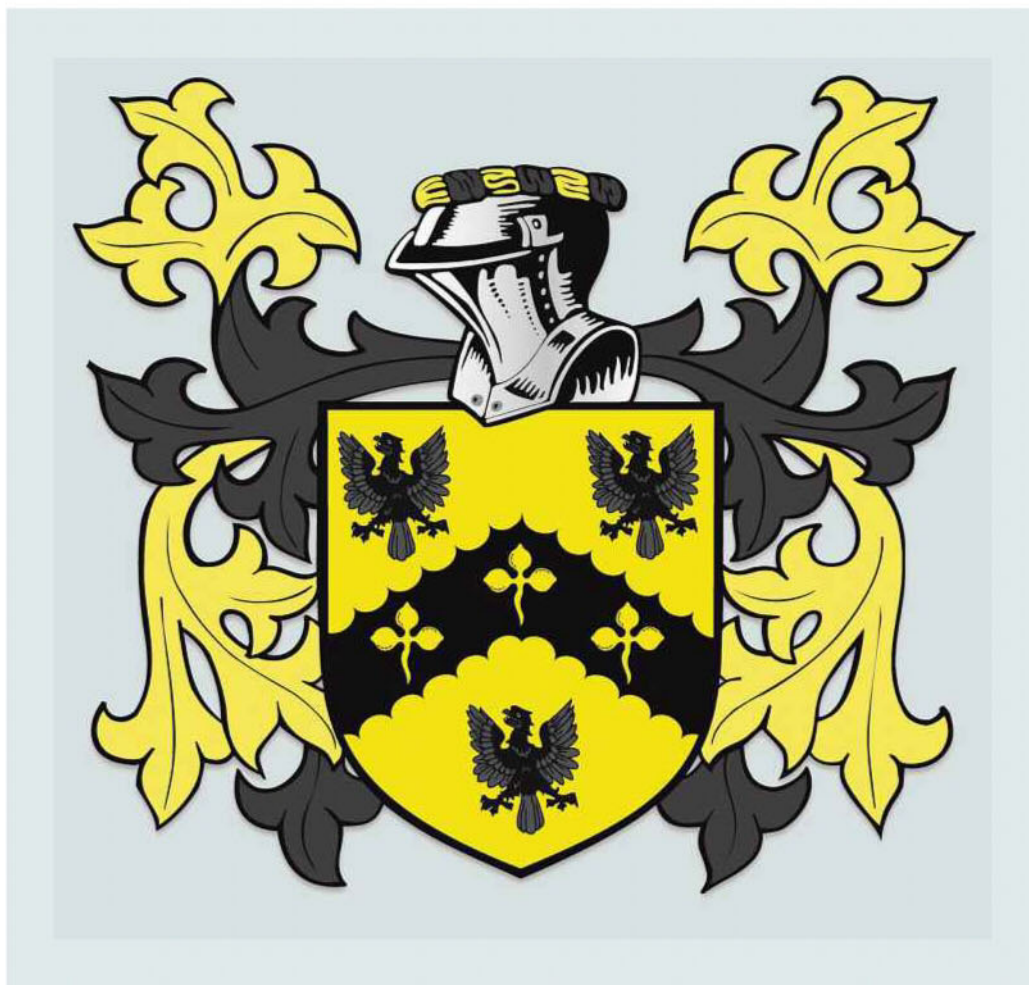


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John Shaw was a lowly corporal who won renown as a skilled boxer and swordsman

# SHAW

Anthony Adolph looks at the fighting spirit of those with the Shaw name

**T**he surname Shaw has three likely origins. The first is as a topographic surname meaning 'dweller by a shaw'. The Old English word sceaga, which became shaw by the Middle Ages, was used of small patches of woodland surrounded by fields or moorland. Shaws stood out as features in the landscape and people who lived by them might become known as living 'by the shaw', and thus it became a surname. The second possible derivation is from the Scots and Irish nickname Sithech, meaning 'wolf', which became a surname and was in some cases anglicised to 'Shaw'. In some cases, the Irish surname Shea (from the Gaelic O Seaghdha 'descendant of Seaghdha') may have morphed into Shaw too.

Interesting Shaws include Sir Edmund Shaw or Shaa (d1488), of the Goldsmith's Company. He became Lord Mayor of London in

1482 and was an intimate friend of Edward IV and the ill-fated Richard III. John Shaw (1789-1815), in sharp contrast, was a lowly corporal who won renown as a skilled boxer and swordsman. In 1815 he won a famous boxing match against the great pugilist Edward 'Ned' Painter. Later the same year, he fought under Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. John was less lucky on that day for, having fought with immense valour, he was cut down and killed. Another Shaw at Waterloo fared better: Sir Charles Shaw (1795-1871) survived the day and, after fighting in Spain in the 1830s, he became Chief Commissioner of Police in Manchester between 1839 and 1842. There is also a famous Shore who is better known under another name. Florence Shore's family changed their surname to that of an elderly relative, from whom they hoped to inherit money – and so she grew up, not as Florence Shore, but as Florence Nightingale. ■

- Shaa
- Shafe
- Shaves
- Shawe
- Shay
- Shayes
- Shore

By **Anthony Adolph**



Anthony is a professional genealogist, having been interested in the subject since childhood. He is also a TV presenter.



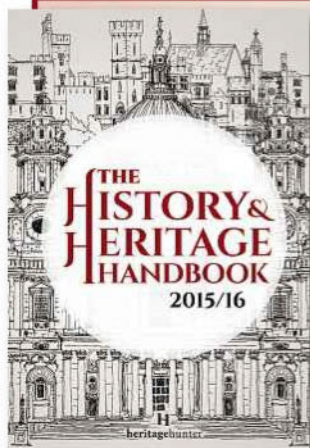
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# Hidden histories: Fire festivals



**Cate Williams** wards off the cold weather by exploring the history of these winter celebrations

The idea behind the ceremony is to burn off bad spirits left from the old year

## ORIGINS

Many celebrations involving light and fire have their origins in ancient pagan rituals. One of the oldest winter celebrations in the world is Yule. This occurs around the winter solstice, when people in the northern hemisphere experience the shortest day and the longest night of the year. The winter solstice represents the rebirth of the sun, and has been traditionally celebrated with bonfires and other fire festivals.

## TORCHLIT PROCESSIONS

Torchlit processions are a popular component of fire festivals in the UK. The ancient (thought to be Neolithic) tradition of Old Glory and the Cutty Wren was revived in 1994 in the village of Middleton in Suffolk. After dark on Boxing Day, a carved wooden wren is carried aloft by the light of flaming torches down the main street of the village to the Bell Inn. Here, Molly dancers (the East Anglian form of Morris dancers) accompanied by musicians dance in honour of the wren.

In Scotland, torchlit processions to celebrate Hogmanay take place in Biggar in Strathclyde, and Comrie in Tayside. The torchlit procession through the town of Biggar, followed by a huge bonfire to symbolise the burning out of the old year, is a re-enactment of an ancient Druid fire festival. In Comrie, locals carry flaming torches to the four points of the compass and then throw the torches onto a bonfire in the village square. This ancient torchlit procession is called the Flambeaux, and was originally performed to drive evil spirits out of the village.

## REVIVALS

More recently, fire festivals have been revived in Britain. They occur in many places in December to celebrate the winter solstice or to mark the end of the old year and the start of the new one. For example, in Wiltshire, the winter solstice has been celebrated most years since 2001 by illuminating the white horse at Alton Barnes with candles in jars.



Garry Walton

## SWINGING FIREBALLS

A rather more spectacular Scottish fire festival to celebrate Hogmanay is held in Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire. At midnight, 60 locals, swinging home-made fireballs above their heads, make their way through the village to the harbour, where the balls are thrown into the sea. The idea behind the ceremony is to burn off any bad spirits left from the old year. It is thought to have started in the 19th century, but could be much older.

## GUISING AND TAR

Another dramatic fire festival held on New Year's Eve is the Allendale Fire Ceremony in Northumberland, which is thought to have pagan origins. Close to midnight, 45 'guisers' (hereditary barrel carriers) parade through the town carrying whisky barrels filled with flaming tar above their heads. When the procession reaches the town square, the barrels are thrown onto a bonfire to light it, while spectators and participants shout "Be damned to he who throws last!"



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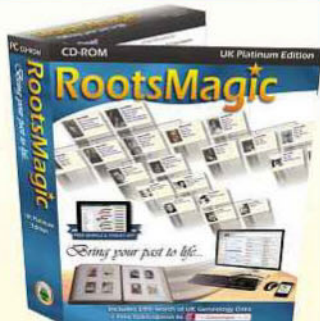
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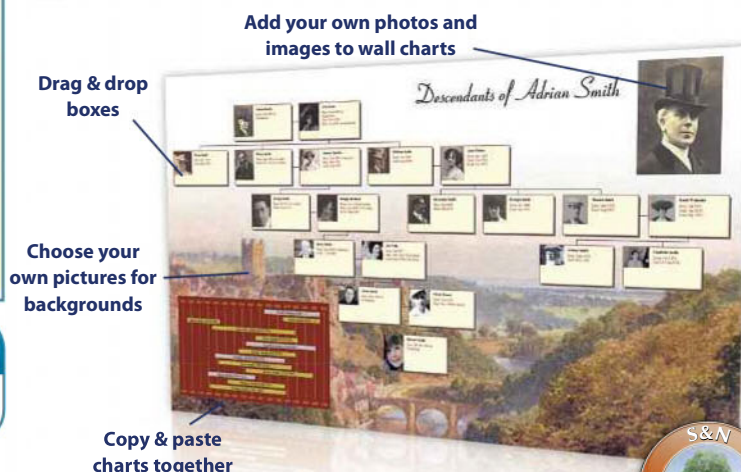
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